

**PETTY AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND CONTRACT FARMING:
A CASE IN TURKEY**

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ABSTRACT

PETTY AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND CONTRACT FARMING: A CASE IN TURKEY

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Understanding the class position of family owned small scale agricultural production units, which constitute a common feature of the rural context in the later capitalized countries, have been one of the major discussion points in the Marxist literature. The continual existence of such a form of production organization with significant non-capitalist features under the enlarging capitalist organization of production despite the initial assumptions of Marxist analysis that it was a transitory form which will soon differentiate between proletariat and bourgeoisie have prompted a number of attempts at explaining the survival of this category. These debates have strongly influenced the analyses in the field of rural sociology from 1960s onwards, providing the conceptual tools for sociological analysis of rural relations of production.

This thesis engages in an attempt of re-appraising the theoretical debates within Marxist analysis of petty agricultural production organization together with considering the recent transnational reorganization of agricultural production. The neo-liberal retraction of state as a regulating force and loosening the protectionist

policies has lead to the rise of the power of Trans-National Corporations (TNCs) in the field of agriculture in the past couple of decades. Contractual farming is defined as a major form of direct relationship TNCs establish with petty agricultural producers to exercise their determining power over the organization of agricultural production.

Together with a case study of contractual farming, the thesis discusses how could we define the class positions of this segment and whether their relationship with TNCs have a significant affect over our definitions.

Keywords: Peasant Question, Marxist Literature, Contract Farming, Transnational Food Companies, Agrarian Transformation

ÖZ

TARIMSAL KÜÇÜK ÜRETİCİLİK VE SÖZLEŞMELİ ÇİFTÇİLİK: TÜRKİYE'DEN BİR ÖRNEK

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Geç kapitalistleşmiş ülkelerin tarımsal yapıları içerisinde yaygın bir özellik oluşturan aile mülkiyetine dayalı küçük ölçekli tarımsal üretim işletmelerinin sınıfsal konumunu anlamak Marksist yazın içerisindeki önemli tartışma konularından biri olmuştur. Erken Marksist değerlendirmelerin geçici bir kategori olduğu ve yakın bir zamanda proleterya ile burjuvazi arasında farklılaşacağı yönündeki öngörülerine rağmen, üretimin genişleyen kapitalist örgütlenmesi içerisinde önemli ölçüde kapitalist olmayan özelliklere sahip böylesi bir üretim örgütlenmesi biçiminin varlığının devamı, bu kategorinin bekasını açıklamak üzere farklı girişimleri tetikledi. Bu tartışmalar 1960lardan itibaren kır sosyolojisi alanındaki incelemeleri güçlü bir şekilde etkileyerek kırsal üretim ilişkilerinin sosyolojik analizi için kavramsal araçları sağladılar.

Bu tez, tarımsal küçük üretim örgütlenmesinin Marksist incelenişi içerisindeki kuramsal tartışmaların, tarımsal üretiminin günümüzdeki ulusaşırı yeniden yapılanmasını da dikkate alan yeni bir ele alınışını gerçekleştirmeye çalışmaktadır. Devletin düzenleyici bir güç olarak geri çekildiği ve korumacı

politikaların gevşetildiği neo-liberal süreç, geçtiğimiz bir kaç on yıl içerisinde Ulus Aşırı Şirketlerin (UAŞler) tarım alanındaki güçlerini arttırmalarına yol açtı. Sözleşmeli çiftçilik ise, UAŞlerin tarımsal üretimin düzenlenmesi üzerindeki belirleyici güçlerini gerçekleştirmek üzere tarımsal küçük üreticiler ile oluşturdukları en önemli doğrudan ilişki biçimi olarak tanımlanmaktadır.

Sözleşmeli çiftçilik üzerine bir alan çalışması ile birlikte bu tez, bu katmanın sınıfsal pozisyonunu nasıl değerlendirebileceğimizi ve onların UAŞler ile olan ilişkilerinin bu değerlendirmemiz üzerinde önemli bir etkisi olup olmadığını tartışmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Köylülük Sorunu, Marksist Literatür, Sözleşmeli Çiftçilik, Ulusaşırı Gıda Şirketleri, Tarımsal Dönüşüm

*To All Those Who Have Suffered
During the Struggle for a Better World...*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DPT	Devlet Planlama Teikilatı (State Planning Department)
IMF	International Money Fund
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SAPD	Socialist Workers Party of Germany
SPD	Social Democratic Party of Germany
TEKEL	Tütün, Tütün Mamülleri, Tuz ve Alkol İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü (General Directorate of Tobacco, Tobacco Products, Salt and Alcohol Businesses)
TIP	Türkiye İşçi Partisi (Turkish Workers Party)
TNC	Trans-National Corporation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Bold prophets, namely those chemists gifted with an imagination, are already dreaming of the day when bread will be made from stones, and when all the requirements of a human diet will be assembled in chemical factories ... But one thing is certain. Agricultural production has already been transformed into industrial production ... Economic life even in the open countryside, once trapped in eternally rigid routines, is now caught up in the constant revolution which is the hallmark of the capitalist mode of production.

Karl Kautsky, *The Agrarian Question*, 1899, p.297.
(Quoted from Goodman and Watts, 1994)

At the turn of the 20th Century, Kautsky was talking about the transformation of agricultural production in the most advanced capitalist societies of his time. The quoted text is surprisingly accurate to the amazing transformations that we are witnessing today. A new wave of technological advancements along with the rising power of Trans-National Corporations brought about the dawn of a transformation of the organization of agricultural production throughout the world, even in its most secluded corners which remained in continuing the traditional forms of agricultural production without much of a change. These new developments introduce a new light for us to investigate the rich and powerful history of theoretical discussion on the class basis of the petty agricultural producers that Marxist social analysis engaged from its very beginnings.

Attempting to undertake a discussion and re-evaluation of different positions within Marxist social theory on the issue of petty agricultural producers together with considering the opportunities presented by the contemporary global

restructuration process of agricultural production, this study aims to investigate the class position of the family owned, small scale agricultural production units through a theoretical discussion of four distinct bodies of literature.

First of all is the arguments provided by the classical sociological approaches to the existence of such a category in a modern society where the socially significant relationships are considered to be located in the urban context and are organized according to rational principles. The second body of literature consists of the theoretical positions of development studies which have emerged partially in response to the hardship of providing reasons for the untransformed structure of the particular social formation of petty agricultural production within the parameters of sociological approaches and also contains a discussion on how to transform or manage them under the context of 'advanced' or 'modern' social and economic relationships.

The third basis is perhaps the most important one as it concentrates on the particular discussions on how to explain the dynamics of existence of the small land-holding of family agriculture, namely the 'peasant studies'. The 'peasant studies' will provide us with many points of consideration which sometimes contradict each other but nevertheless should be sorted out in order to make sense of some of the internal dynamics of this social form. Finally we will be dealing with a new set of paradigms designed to make sense of the changing trends within the fundamentals of how the agricultural production is organized on a global scale. The discussions on the trans-nationalization process and development of a new international food regime seems to present a solution to the dilemma of contradictory existence of small scale family farm as new forms of relationships appear to connect this form of production directly to the rest of production and consumption circuits.

The problematic that the theoretical debate of this thesis is centred around arises from the Marxist literature that is dealing with the survival of petty agricultural production form in spite of the assumptions of its imminent differentiation in to

one of the two contradictory classes of capitalism. As the adequacy of the initial writings which treated the form of petty agricultural production organization as a transitory category came into question and the need for reconsidering the analysis pertaining to this particular category rose, the prominent figures of Marxism at the turn of the 20th Century undertook more through investigation of the later capitalizing countries' agricultural structures and the non-capitalist features within the organization of agricultural production, a subject which had been previously neglected. Their increasing attention was also the result of the pressure from practical political situation that they faced as the working class political movement gained ground in countries that had untransformed forms of production organization dominating the rural context and they were challenged by the populist political project in order to incorporate the demands pertaining to the survival of petty agricultural form of production into the political program of revolutionary parties.

Following the retreat of the revolutionary wave of 1917, the influence of Marxist program of proletarian movement started to gradually decline. When radical revolutionary movements made a comeback in the 1960s, the populist program gained an important influence over the theoretical field that positioned itself within Marxism. The theorists of the period devised alternative conceptualizations that were seen relevant for the later capitalising countries which were dominated under the earlier capitalized countries which were also their ex-colonizers and the countries inheriting such a tradition. These approaches assumed that all the segments within the 'dependent' countries were subordinated, thus a front like struggle against the exploiters from outside, 'imperialist' countries that intermingle the contradictory claims of different segments was the way to build revolutionary struggle. The scholars of Marxist orientation within this theoretical approach tried to find justifications within the Marxist conceptual framework, likening the differing forms of production organization to working class, emphasising their labouring qualities and the fact they were subordinated through exchange relations.

However, as the populist struggles' radical energies slowed down, so the influence of theoretical attempts that intermingled populist conceptions with Marxist concepts. At the beginning of the 1980s, new approaches to analysing the particular qualities of organization of agricultural production in later capitalizing countries, exhibiting some non-capitalist qualities have developed, which kept more faithful to the original Marxist conceptualizations have emerged. The emphasis that these new approaches lay on the qualities that serve capital accumulation in agricultural production and the differentiation of class positions within and between petty agricultural production units have fit in well with the attempt at understanding the new forms of relationships that the trans-nationalization reorganization of agricultural production have brought about.

One of the central concepts that I will device my research question around, thus, is derived from this final body of theoretical discussions on the developments emerging from reorganization of the organization of agricultural production according to the liberalization trends and intervention of the Trans-National Corporations. I will try to make sense of the points in the four areas of theoretical basis in relation to an actual contemporary form of relation that has been introduced and started spreading more and more recently. In the literature on a newly emerging agricultural and food regime, a new form of "contract farming" is argued to transform the conceptual basis of petty-agricultural producers, defined as semi-autonomous actors who had a measure of control over the employment of their own labour, resulting from their ownership over means of production. Now it is argued that the highly centralized forms of capitalist organization on the agriculture and food sector is invading this autonomy through a contractual arrangement which also extends the control of organized capital over the production process through different forms such as supplying the brands of seeds that provides the kinds and qualities of products that the firm needs but also transforms the labour process attached to the cultivation of them; enforcing constant supervision by experts on the basis of ensured quality and insistence of certain practices in the name of scientific/technical 'know-how'; obligation of the usage of excessive chemical fertilizers and pesticides, etc.

I am intending to problematize the discussions on the nature of petty-agricultural production organization on the basis of the relationship of such a contractual relation and the penetration of centralized capitalist organization into the operating mechanisms of this form, meaning the extension of control over the labour processes employed in these enterprises and whether this could mean a shift in the definition of the concept. As I am going to question these themes within the context of Turkey, I have also included a chapter on the analysis of the overall structure of agriculture in Turkey. In this chapter I have provided an analysis separated under two headings as one deals with the historical context that has shaped the existence of petty-agricultural producers whereas the other offers some insight into the structural changes that could be argued to have provided the establishment of new relationships that are compatible with the new global agricultural and food regime.

Finally, the field work itself is comprised of an analysis of the conditions of existence of a group of contractual petty agricultural tobacco producers in the north western part of the black sea region. The investigation of the transformation of their production process and how this transformation occurred will provide us with illustrative material in discussing the positioning of such forms of production organization in terms of their class positions.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2. 1. The Historical Transformation of Social Formation

The issue of social transition has been at the centre of social scientific inquiry since its very inception. What motivated the forefathers of social sciences into taking to scientific attempts at understanding the society were the radical changes in the structure of economic, social and intellectual life (Turner, et al; 1998). Nisbet (1966) argues that, the postulations of the philosophers of the early modern period, either being the political writings of Hobbes, Locke, Spencer, Montesquieu or Rousseau; the economic studies of Ricardo, Mill or Smith or the attempts at a study of society through scientific investigation which came later on from Tonnies, Saint-Simone, Durkheim, Marx and Weber have been efforts of making sense of a society changing under the influence of emerging historical structures. As these figures had to deal with a plethora of problems that the wide-scale social transformation brought about in 19th Century (Marsh, 2006) they were driven to trying to understand and develop tools necessary to deal with them, either yearning for a new concept of *harmony* or embracing the notion of *progress* (Gordon, 1993).

The broader framework of the transition in question consists of a long period of changeover in the fundamental principles that social reality is structured around, starting from 15th Century up until the recently ended 20th Century. In order to describe and understand the mechanisms lying under these transformations, we have to first familiarize with the common tendency of offering dualistic

conceptualizations that the social scientific endeavour has when dealing with the issue. This dualism can perhaps be exemplified by the powerful imagery provided by Durkheim in his discussion on *organic* and *mechanical* solidarity and the social organizations that they form (1984). The prominent conceptualizations derived from Durkheim on the issue of the long-term transformation suggest that the social formations lacking the specialized functions within the division of labour were in fact repetitive in the social interaction that transpires within and had a relatively low level of social differentiation among the people belonging to such a group as against the more complex and dynamic societies which enabled higher degree of specialization and differentiation (Pope, 1998).

When this duality is specifically located within the historical context, we face with the double concept of *traditional* vs. *modern* societies. The traditional society, in the case of historical comparison is situated within the Middle Ages, a time before the rise of urban centres together with all the other modern features of democratic state, industry and public space. The traditional social organisation is pictured as a predominantly pastoral landscape holding medieval forms of life with rigid social structure that does not allow for a lot of social mobility; fairly isolated rural settlements with very little interaction and people who reproduce themselves and the existing order according to a long-established and “stagnant” manner. We can easily infer from these postulations that the earlier works of social historians dealing with the era, such as Pirenne (1937) and Braudel (1979), have played an enormous influence on shaping the concepts and framework that we apply in understanding the differing aspects of the social reality which have been radically transformed in what Polanyi goes so far as to call “The Great Transformation” (2001).

At the other end of this spectrum, the end result of this ‘great transformation’ is described as a social reality where constant change becomes the norm and daily life is very much shaped by thousands of interactions that take place between various actors that are interlinked on a global scale. The social interactions which are considered as holding determining significance are mainly located in urban

centres and a significant amount of people are obtaining their livelihoods through performing non-agricultural activities. Giddens (1990) emphasizes the predominance of rationality as the mode of thought and belief in scientific knowledge and argues that this results in the belief in the capability of constant change, whereas Bauman (1991) points out to growth of the institutional organs of governing bodies in the attempt of fulfilling the obsession of social control through the spread of the regulation and administration into wider aspects of human life.

The changes that this historical transformation brought about have been emphasized to a point that the development of these dynamic aspects are depicted as a constant process of uncontrollable change in various contributions to contemporary social science literature, such as Bauman's *Modernity and the Holocaust* (2007) which claims the authorities have been driven to commit atrocities against those they deem as the cause of cultural ambivalence as they are not at all capable of implementing the previously mentioned obsession with the idea of order and control and Beck who describes the current social condition as one marked by constant threat of arbitrary happenings which can not be foreseen, let alone be controlled (1992).

The contrasts that are offered between two distinct social formations are striking. Trying to analyze and understand this process of change has been among the most central topics of investigation of social analysis. There are several reasons for this, among which we can discern the fact that the social scientific endeavour depends its very existence to the deepening and continuation of this process as the rational enterprise which produces the 'reflexive knowledge of the human social world' (Wagner, 2001). Another point is that as the roots of the scientific investigation of social reality has started during this period and the original works had the specific aim of understanding and explaining these changes, it has left a very powerful blueprint in the form of tools and concepts that define the social reality in comparative terms and exemplary studies to further.

In addition to these facts, what I believe to be the strongest reason for the importance of considering historical transformation that shaped the current social reality also consists my justification for starting with a discussion on the subject of historical transformation as one of the bases of my theoretical framework is the proposition that the social reality can only be grasped in its actuality through the investigation of its changing nature. The necessity of handling the investigation of social reality through a consideration of its historical movement is stated by Abrams as the need to accept the 'distinctive conception of causality (or structuring) as *manifold, sequential and cumulative*' (1982: 302). The main argument under this study is the claim that social reality itself is shaped in a constant state of change and the explanations provided by the social scientific endeavour which do not take this fact into consideration will remain partial and probably flawed too. Besides the theoretical significance of the discussion on different forms that the historical transformation has taken for the subject at hand; I also think that any study attempting to understand an aspect of the social reality as it is, should deal in one way or another with this meta-theoretical issue of social sciences, namely how it was before and how it came to be.

We should now advance to the attempt of clarifying the theoretical conceptualisation that we are going to adopt in order to refer to the subject of the great period of societal change as we have accepted the relevance of it. Because of their relative contributions to our understanding, I would like to bring in two different sets of conceptual definitions in the attempt of describing the various currents of social transformations that has lead to the shaping of the current context that we examine the social reality. The first of these paradigms handles the general changes that has taken place in a variety of spheres of social organization in their own sakes and handles these as a part of general evolutionary movement of human society called *Modernisation*. The second one presents a more oriented analysis in the form of determining a more specific causal mechanism behind the historical development and by illustrating how the *emergence of capitalism* as a distinct logic of operation that governs the social

organization, attempts an explanatory account rather than merely a descriptive one.

2. 1. 1. Modernisation Process

Despite the criticisms towards the concept of *Modernisation* that it has generally been applied in a manner to infuse a degree of ambiguity to the actors and contradictions of historical development (Bauman, 1991) I believe that integrating the discussions on *Modernisation* gives us the advantage of being able to grasp a wider variety of factors that are affected through the currents of historical transformation. After all, the social science literature has generally adapted the concept of *Modernisation* to describe this grand historical process and the plurality of factors that are underlined and the insight that this perspective can provide will become important when we will be delineating social discrepancies present in some forms of production organizations in contexts which did not follow the earlier examples of social transformations.

When purposing a definition for *Modernisation*, Hall describes this process of transformation as changes in four separate realms which have interacted with each other in shaping a new form of society: the political, the economic, the social and the cultural (1995). According to Hall, this process of transformation gives way to a special form of social formation called *Modernity*, with defining characteristics like secular forms of political power, predominance of monetary exchange, dissolution of fixed social positions and hierarchies and the non-disputed acceptance of rationality and science as the basis of legitimate knowledge.

Perhaps before accepting the concept of *Modernity* in order to define the social formation that we live in today, we should carefully note that this term has been increasingly subject to criticisms by the contemporary intellectuals who emphasize the particularities of different parts of the world and the socio-cultural experiences that are shaped in non-Western contexts. The process of modernisation is described as a dominating relationship and the term modernity is

accused of being a partial, biased and Euro-centrist concept to describe today's social reality, which is used to universalize the essentially particularistic qualities of western social formation and legitimize the hegemony developed and force deployed by the western powers over other parts of the world in the name of transforming them (for an example of this criticism see Bhambra, 2007).

Against this criticism Heller (1999) suggests that we should delineate the modernity from what she calls 'modern social arrangement'. Throughout her study Heller struggles to give a philosophical definition to modernity as a formation which thrives on negation. So, she argues, when the framework of responding to negations and criticisms in a systematic rational basis establishes itself, than every other extra-modern configuration that comes into contact and contradiction with modernity is incorporated within the specific type of dialectics that defines the modernity. Furthering this discussion, Heller argues that the modern social arrangement, which had been steamrolled by the engine of modernity, has taken over all the other arrangements through incorporation (ibid.: 51). This discussion between the particularities of non-Western social context and the incorporation of them within the basic principals of operation of the dominant social formation will become important again when discussing the non-capitalist qualities of the petty-commodity production.

In order to justify the adoption of such a contested concept, I should clarify that the notion of *modernisation process* will be used to specifically refer to the process of transformation and marginalisation of the forms of rural life which have been common for generations before the introduction of more effective forms of agricultural cultivation and the rapid urbanization of the economic activities together with the development of industrial production. This conceptualisation emphasizes the dynamic nature of the modernisation process, similar to Bauman's statement that modernity is only a process of change and not a specific state of being (cited in Blackshaw, 2005: 38). Despite the variety of discussions and the reach of different meanings the term encompasses I would like to utilize this concept in order to refer to the process of transformation which

disintegrates the 'traditional' forms of social organisation, mainly dissolving the predominantly rural social formation and which generates a course of action that gives rise to the organization of production on a larger scale on the basis of accumulation and reorganisation of other aspects social relations in accordance with the necessities that this organisation brings; such as the concentration of the population on urban areas, a higher possibility of mobility for people, wide-ranging substructure developments in the fields like transportation and communication that changes the way people experience their daily lives.

Now let us delve into a more through description of the currents of social transformation that has taken place though the process of modernisation in order to better illustrate the relevancy of the discussions on how this process is actually initiated, what kind of diverse forms it takes and which social formations that it effects in different social contexts to the effort of understanding the specificities of petty-agricultural producers in social formations that have been subject to the modernization process later on, when it was already rooted in certain parts of the world. Among the significant changes that the modernisation process have brought about were the reorganisation of agriculture on the basis of greater productivity (Cooper, 1990), leading to the emergence of a surplus of population that was free to move and provide the basis for a new form of organisation of production (Wood, 2002: 141-146), development of new forms of utilizing energy and machinery (Gimpel, 1996) and rise of urban centres along with industrial production and new products that people use in their daily lives (Hughes, 1970: 46).

Some theorists have also concentrated on the changes that take place within the political framework through the modernisation process. An often referenced account of the political changes brought about by the modernisation process is provided by Moore (1966). In this through work, he describes a long process of social transformation of commercialization of agriculture, marginalisation of the agricultural activity and rural life and shifting of the central economic activities towards urban realms with the rise of industrial production and development of

new administrative bodies aiming to control the new social organization, which in turn enabled the rising bourgeoisie to obtain the control of it and assert their control over social system which gave way to liberal democracy after much struggle with the remnants of the older regime.

Similar to basic points of this account, Potter (2000) also notes the functional necessities for a more inclusive organization of state with growing democratic institutions of government, in order to be able to infuse within the growing and differing social interactions and rising population in the urban centres. What is more, despite sharing the general notion of a trend of democratization accompanying modernization process, Dahrendorf (1992) argues that the implementation of democracy within the institutional framework of social organizations were in order to avoid the threat of revolutionary changes and enable a channel of moderation within the system.

Whatever the explanation provided for it, the main assumption shared seems to be an expectation for democratization of the political structure and wider participation or influence of people in the practices of government with the advancement of modernisation process. This assumption will become problematic once we start to deal with the specifics of the social contexts where certain aspects of modernisation takes place like rapidly developing economic activity and urbanization but some structures of social organization are left without being totally transformed, such as the traditional forms of employment of labour, especially in agriculture. The inconsistency of the trend of democratization becomes further problematic when the non-democratic character of certain regimes had become an object of criticism against the backing up they received from the modernization theorists of the development studies, citing their measurements of development based on statistical determinants of economic performance.

2. 1. 2. Emergence of Capitalism

Before advancing to the discussions on ‘development’ which concerns itself with the question of how to advance and deepen the modernization process, meaning the process of transformation of general conditions of existence of a non-dynamic and repetitive social organization mainly based on agricultural production to a rapidly changing society in which economic capabilities are constantly improving (Wills, 2005), we should first deal with clarifying the second one of the conceptual tools that we will in discussing the social transformation that we are going to examine. Basing our conceptualization of the process of this historical change on the discussions of the *emergence of capitalism* gives us a perspective through which we can delineate certain causal mechanisms behind the shaping of today’s conditions of social existence.

When dealing with the general historical trends of transformation, we can discover certain tendencies which form the operating logic underlying the current social formation, the capitalism. It is clear to me that underlying all the diverse forms that the social formation takes in different social contexts and through technological and historical developments, the fundamental properties of the organization of social reality have remained in place since the accumulation of capital has become the basic principle of operation in the production process. Marx argues that once the capital as a form of abstraction is formed as a social relationship, the social basis for the production is severed and it is also conceived as a form of abstraction in general terms. Production is increased through the increase of productivity just for the sake of expanding the production cycle (1861-3)¹. Thus the ever-expanding drive for pursuit of profits becomes the determining factor in the social organization.

¹ The argument here is heavily bought from Murray (2004) as the Economic Manuscripts of 1861-63 of Marx cited as the original source could not be reached.

Another aspect that gives capitalism a distinct characteristic as a social system is the fact that the market indisputably becomes the main determinant of the organization of production. The existence of market as a social relation in nearly all of the social formations that people have developed throughout history is acknowledged, but only in capitalism the market becomes the main determining force in allocating the resources and productive energies of people and the prices of commodities are increasingly determined by the costs of their production (Marx, 1973, 459-473). Thus, the predetermination of market mechanisms of the conditions of existence of every unit of social organization and the non-stopping drive for accumulation seems to be defining points of a capitalist system. These two points will become relevant when discussing the characteristics of societies which do not exhibit the explicit qualities expected at the end of modernisation process and have some forms of organisation which are characterised by the application of non-capitalist forms of labour.

In order to further clarify the reasons of calling a social formation as capitalist and the explanatory power it provides us with, we should perhaps deal with the historical origins of capitalism and how it came to dominate the world according to its own logic of operation. Handling the two disputing explanations of the emergence of capitalism will enable me to better illustrate the reference point I will take in determining the capitalist nature of a social formation. The two approaches on how to understand the formation and rise to the power of capitalism differ according to what they hold to be the driving force behind this transformation. The basic point of argument is between the assumption that capitalism as a new social formation was brought about by the development of trade which is considered to be an external dynamic to the feudal social organization and the assumption that it emerged out of the contradictions of feudal relations of production itself as a result of the class struggle between serfs and landlords (Kaye, 1995: 43-50). These two positions, as we shall see, also influence differing perspectives employed in explaining the transformations experienced by the social formations of countries which have been subject to the conditions of capitalism later than the first group of countries under conditions

which have resulted in, among other things, the particular formations in agriculture that this thesis will engage with the effort of explaining.

As noted earlier, the seminal works of medieval historians such as Pirenne (1970) and Braudel (1972) which were among the first proponents of the thesis that attribute a determining role to the expansion of commercialization in the transformation of feudal social organization have been quite influential. Later on, Sweezy (1978) has explicitly stated the argument of the development of long distance trade as the source of emergence of a new 'system' of production. This point of view also can also claim a basis among the Marxist literature as Marx and Engels seem to place the impetus for the transformation of feudal society in the development of new trade routes, discovery of America, establishment of the colonies and the newly developing abundance of means of exchange in the very beginnings of *Communist Manifesto*².

On the other hand the approach which investigates the dynamics of the feudalism starts out from the crisis of this mode of production itself. There is a general agreement on the issue that feudalism as a mode of production could not sustain itself and entered a terminal crisis circa 16th Century, although the reasons provided for this crisis varied. For example Tawney (1967: 177-213) argues the decline in the value of money because of the extra value appropriated from overseas and rises in prices forced landlords to increase the pressure of appropriation beyond the point it was possible to sustain anymore whereas Bois (1990) claims that the tendency of population trends rising more rapidly than the

² It is perhaps necessary to note that the proof provided here does not exhaust the claims and bases of the proponents of said argument. I have provided this citation just as an example for the purpose of pointing out to the fact that both sides of this position consider themselves to be on the Marxist grounds. The discussion on the relevancy of such claims are left out, because it does not fit in the limitations of this study. However, I also feel compelled to argue that even the basic reading of the mentioned source comes across the detailed description of bourgeoisie as the social actor with defining characteristics of constantly revolutionarizing relations of production, hence despite the fact that the historical importance of the trade movements is acknowledged in passing, it is still clear to me that defining criteria for an argument on the emergence of capitalism should be concerned with how the production is organized.

production in the feudal organization of production have resulted in the crisis of income for the landlords, disintegrating the basis of economy. Among these different accounts, the most significant seems to be that of Dobb (1964) where he firmly states the driving factor behind the transition as the class struggle between serfs and lords as he examines the crisis of feudalism affected all the Western Europe starting from 14th Century onwards, but as he remarks the power of lords over serfs was only overcome in those contexts where the resistance of peasants were strong enough politically.

Following through the influence of Dobb's work and the discussion between him and Sweezy, Brenner (1976) concluded that the capitalism could only be developed by the social actors emerging from within the agricultural producers. In his view the revolutionary drive came from the bigger peasants who could accumulate more and started to invest with the aim of rising productivity in order to reap a greater gain through their independent access to the commodity market. In my opinion, this view is compatible with Marx's more through writings on the subject (Marx, 1991: 323-325).

The marginalisation of rural life and agricultural activity has historically led to different forms of transformation of rural societies in different social contexts. In the earliest case of modernisation of 15th and 16th Century England, the common lands of rural communities were appropriated for private use by the *enclosure* movement and the serfs, the independent agricultural producers were forced out of land on a mass scale so the agricultural production was successfully transformed into capitalist farming with capitalist farmer employing agricultural workers on the basis of wage.

The departure of the working population from independent agricultural units that have supported their livelihood has brought about a significant change in the conditions of existence of the labouring masses. By being deprived of means of subsistence, working in exchange of direct payment becomes a necessity. This new system of earning one's life is based on the concept of wage-labour where

the amount of labour spent on work is paid a specific wage after certain time intervals. Wage system operates through contractual arrangements because, while being the initiators of this working arrangement, the capitalists, who own the means of production, need a certain amount of production completed to bring in money by selling the products in order to pay the wages (which consist only a part of the worth of the products actualized in the market; the rest being appropriated by the capitalist as the surplus-value). As a result, the prevalence of contractual arrangements of wage-labour has not only determined the conditions of existence of the majority of the population who have moved into cities and have now become a class of “free” workers who can sell their labour anywhere without having any connection to land, but it has also extended its reach of influence to the people remaining in rural areas who have also become subject to the formal relations of urban economy based on contractual wages.

Even though the modernisation process has not followed the same path in other countries as in this ‘ideal’ case of England, marginalisation of rural relations can still be discerned as a central theme in the transformation of Western societies. Despite the fact that French country side did not evolve into capitalist farms operating on rented lands and mostly retained small-scale family farming units, urbanisation still drove in large amounts of population with development of industry and the remaining farms were forced to adopt effective and competitive techniques in order to supply the growing population who did not produce their own food and the industry which used the agricultural products as inputs. In central Europe the German *Junkers* forced the free peasantry into a second period of enserfment in order to accumulate enough wealth from agricultural production to sustain an industrialisation process in the urban centres. In the Northern side of the new continent the immigrants from Europe found vast lands for extensive agricultural production which not only produced enough for urban-industrial development but also by the virtue of large-scale and lower per-acre cost, enabled the application of high-cost machinery in agriculture which raised the productivity and effective use of labour. Finally in Russia, a fairly late-comer of the modernisation process, the attempts at collectivizing the agricultural land and the

effective use of an extremely centralized state power enabled the rising amounts of wealth extracted from agricultural production and the forceful transformation of rural surplus in order to sponsor the development of industry.

Whatever the specific form it takes, common features among all these examples of transformation into a modern capitalist society based mainly on urban industrial production can be listed as such: First of all, the agricultural production becomes, over a relatively short period of time, increasingly effective and the productivity rises through the introduction of competitive measures either because of the development of capitalist farming or because of the subjection under capitalist economy. Then we can observe that the wealth produced in agricultural activity is transferred to a rapidly rising industrial sector. The development of industry is also accompanied by the movement of a large amount of the population to urban centres, to be absorbed in urban economy, conducting their lives in wage-based activities.

2. 2. Development Studies

However, during the course of the 20th Century doubts have started to rise about the assumption that this model of modernisation of the Western countries would reproduce itself in all the other parts of the world. This was the basis of the question of “development” that has become an issue for the social scientific enterprise starting from the middle of the century. The development studies have started in the post-World War II conjuncture when it became evident that despite the fact that many non-Western countries, some of which were emerging as independent nations for the first time, have been fairly integrated with the capitalist world system and developed frameworks of modern institutional systems and national markets; they still did not exhibit the full extend of the features of “modern” societies: most of the population in these countries did not become urbanised, or the relations within these countries did not ‘modernize’ enough.

2. 2. 1. Modernisation School

The group of research projects that has started the development studies, later named as 'Modernisation School' identified various issues that have been deemed problematic such as the lack of the operating of institutional organisation or relationships; problems of unplanned urbanization; the inability of the industrial sector to accommodate for the growing needs of modern life and finally and more importantly for the subject at hand the fact that certain characteristics of the traditional arrangements of social division of labour remained persistent, especially in the organization of agricultural production. This meant that paid labour in agriculture and capitalist farming did not become a widespread form in the majority of these countries which have otherwise integrated with the world capitalist market and modern international framework and large segments of the population have remained in rural areas, sustained within family-farming peasant units or larger units of land exploited by bonded or semi-bonded forms of labour.

The researchers of Modernisation School have dubbed these later capitalising countries as 3rd World Countries and the initial focus of their research were the perceived backwardness of them. This school of thought failed to acknowledge any systematic impediment against the possibility of recreating the same process of urbanisation/industrialisation/modernisation successfully in these countries, so they tried to identify the reasons behind the inability of their economic "take-off" and the framework of their analyses were shaped by a concern over the 'setbacks' of development argued to be originating from indigenous characteristics. It was argued that the modernisation process could not take place because of the specific traditions that people hold and the power that the people hold these traditions with. This line of research has declined into attempts of identifying different characteristics that people from 'undeveloped' countries have which were argued to be possible reasons for the state of their society, even going as far as arguing for a set of innate qualities of being "backward".

2. 2. 2. Dependency School

This scheme came under radical criticism in the 1960s when Dependency School of scholars like Amin, Frank and Cardoso emerged in the field of Development Studies, analysing the specific situation in the non-Western countries, but from a perspective emerging from within these countries. Influenced by Lenin's theory of Imperialism, main argument of the writers of Dependency School was that it was not the internal qualities of the non-Western countries that held them from following the same route of development of the Western countries, but it was rather the result of the effect that Western countries had over them which kept these countries 'underdeveloped'. It was argued that the relationship between the Western powers, which had already developed into a more advanced social form and other countries was a relation of **dependency** and the Western powers were transferring the wealth produced in the dependent countries, thus 'developing underdevelopment' in other parts of the world.

One of the noteworthy theoretical advances made by the scholars of Dependency School has been the analytical tool developed to address specifically the mechanism of transfer of wealth.

Faced with the need to expose the fact that the exploitation in the relationship between advanced Western countries and others has been continuing, even though many of the formal colonies have gained independency during the decolonization movements; the Dependency theorists have developed the term **unequal exchange**. This concept suggests that originating from the differences in the levels of development, the countries which have become capitalized earlier on have built a **core** in the international trade which holds a monopoly over the technologically advanced goods which can either be highly developed goods which the later-capitalising countries may lack because of the inability to recreate the similar levels of production or necessary tools to improve conditions of production.

In order to obtain these goods, the countries outside of the core form a periphery around the core countries and buy these advanced goods in exchange of mundane

goods such as natural resources or semi-developed goods which are supplied in larger amounts than the social labour-time worth of the obtained goods. By holding a monopoly position over constantly developing goods, the core countries transfer extra amounts of wealth from their periphery compared to what they are creating themselves. The concept of **unequal exchange** holds a similar strength when applied to rural-urban relationship and even though I find the general framework of Dependency School a bit schematic, I intend to use this concept in my analysis of the petty-commodity producers and their relations with the wider economical framework.

When dealing with the schematic nature of Dependency School's theoretical framework, I think it is important to note that despite the fever tone of the criticisms that it has developed against the Development Studies school, which lay the foundations of its standpoint, the 'peripheral' countries in this paradigm are still conceptualised with dualistic terms of the Modernisation School. The analysis of dependency school could be argued to have inherited the habit of problematizing "underdeveloped countries" in differential terms to the ideal 'modern, industrial, capitalist' world. This presents evidence that underneath the "radical" politics that underdevelopment studies preach such as de-linking from exploitive relations of dependency and severing ties of international trade with core countries achieving a 'real' or complete independency, the only thing it seems to offer is another prescription to replicate the modernisation and industrialisation process that has taken place in the 'core' countries. So, the ideal case remains to be the example of 'developed countries' and similar to Modernisation School, Dependency School also claims to identify the real obstacles in front of the actual development of the countries which have not yet taken the ideal path of Great Transformation.

2. 2. 3. Capitalist System Theories

Later on certain modifications were made to Dependency School's theoretical framework to improve the analysis of how the 'underdeveloped' forms of

organisation operate within the capitalist system. Wallerstein has proposed that the social reality was shaped by a 'world system' which, starting from 15th Century onwards, has made the market exchange the determining force of social relationships, so every part of the world considered within this system should be considered as capitalist. The main improvement that this point of view brings about is its attempt of moving beyond the simple categorizations of the previous studies on the issue of the countries that have supposedly not yet completed the process of urbanisation-modernisation-industrialisation. Rather than considering a group of advanced countries as capitalist and regarding the other countries or specific characteristics within those countries as externally related abnormalities to this system, a line of thought which has been inspired by the need to overcome the dualistic approach has thrived following the 70s.

Among the concepts that have been developed within these more recent discussions on how to comprehend the differences in the social relations of later-capitalising countries, I find the concept of *articulation* particularly interesting and I intend to try to integrate the insight it brings into my own analysis. Laclau and others have brought attention to the concept of articulation claiming that when the capitalist relations entered the later capitalising countries, in addition to the traditional forms of social organisation's not being dissolved and marginalised to the extend of expectations, they did not remain powerful within an independent sphere which should be conquered for the modernisation to prevail or have been simply exploited by an external relation of unequal exchange. The argument presented is that these relations have been articulated into the new logic of social organisation and became a part of its genuine construction.

In order to better illustrate the argument of articulation theory, it might be helpful to bring about a popular issue of discussion regarding the working mechanism of articulation, which is the surviving power of the system of patriarchy, as in the continuation of the male-dominance within the modern industrial society despite the lack of any actual basis for it in the logic of the new system. Disappointing the expectations that once the life becomes more urbanized and the public sphere

opens up for more participation, the discrimination of women would cease to exist; the advancement of the new industrial system kept the traditional social division of labour based on gender intact. Sometimes even new mechanisms were applied that strengthened the oppression of women by profiting from their unpaid labour at home to keep the wages paid to men at reasonable levels and for using them as a source of cheap labour force.

Thus, despite the idealistic representations of theoretical abstractions, such differentiating practices indeed become a part of how the operating mechanisms of capitalism are constructed. By arguing that the traditional forms of social organisation commonly existing within the social fabric of the later capitalized countries are integrated in such a way that they provide benefits for the newly established social organisation, this analysis gives us a means to make sense of the remaining power of the forms of labour and social practices that have disappeared in the earlier capitalized countries.

Many varieties have been developed within the theme of articulation for the analysis of the agricultural sector of later-capitalized countries which did not exhibit capitalist farming as the predominant form. It is argued that the traditional forms of peasant production keep on existing because as long as the peasant household extend the amount of the labour they spent on agricultural production compared to the amount of work that could be done with paid-labour in order to sustain their livelihood, this form of organisation of production lowers the production costs of the agricultural goods. Seen that the agricultural goods provide both raw materials for the industry and consumption goods for the working class, it has been argued that the capitalist system that has grown in these countries actually profited from the persistence of such a form.

Another point that has been made is that the peasant households provide livelihood for majority of the population who could not otherwise be employed in the weakly developed industrial sector. A third argument attempting to explain the reasons behind the ongoing existence of traditional forms of organisation of

production in agriculture and the lack of a widespread revolutionary change of the relations of production in the immediate producing unit emphasizes a perceived weakness of bourgeoisie in the later capitalized countries. It is argued that in order to achieve a managing power and sustainability for the system in general, the weakness of the bourgeoisie as a class in later capitalized countries necessitates an alliance for the ruling elites in favour of capitalist construction with other casts within society who hold power over traditional social organisations or popular support from undifferentiated peasants. As a result this un-solid base of legitimacy for the new system is identified as the reason behind the inability of bourgeois class to dissolve the already existing social framework and initiate a mass transformation in agricultural system.

These and other approaches in the same line present us with the idea that a total transformation to the forms prevalent in modern industrial system of the earlier capitalized countries can not be initiated and the persistence of the traditional forms of social organisation actually play an essential role in the functioning of the specific form of capitalism that has taken shape in later capitalized societies. Following this argument I am more inclined to deal with the peasant form of organisation of production in later capitalized countries as an authentic and intrinsic part of the organisation of the operation of capitalism in the special form it takes in later-capitalized countries rather than an aberration that has been irrationally hanging on to the social organisation and resisting against the “historical development” either because of certain qualities that some countries or the people within them possess or because the exploitative relations with developed nations does not allow a genuine, unadulterated capitalism to develop.

2. 3. ‘Peasant’ Question

As the subject of this study has been put as a particular form of organization in the field of agricultural production which is shaped by the later adaptation of certain countries into capitalism; I have tried to position the discussions on this specific

form of organization of production within the two broader discussions, the first of them being on historical transformation of societies formulized as modernisation process or the emergence of capitalism and the second one dealing with the peculiarities within the social formations of later capitalized countries formulized within the question of development. Now it is time to specify the extent of the problematics specifically associated with the subject of the study, the form of organization of production that we could label as petty agricultural production.

I will deal with the deliberate emphases that are aimed at by proposing this concept in labelling the form of organization of production in question after I discuss various attempts at conceptualizing the same phenomenon and the theoretical standpoints behind them, but let me first lay down the qualities of the subject we are trying to analyze. The concept of petty agricultural producer is proposed in order to refer to a general category of small-scale family owned agricultural production units, which includes non-capitalist features such as subsistence production, use of unpaid family labour as the common pool to provide labour needs, a relative measure of independence from the competitive pressures of the market demanding constant renovation of production process or a possibility to resist them for a given period of time, use of non-commodity production factors such as self-produced seeds, fertilizers or water obtained through own means and not paid for, an indifference to a certain extent to the market value of the land as it is inherited or acquired through other non-market means and is depended heavily upon as a means of survival and ought to be kept at extreme costs, against the possibility of selling it out at market value.

We should consider all these specific factors which are laid down as the defining qualities of the petty agricultural producers as unexpected deviations from the ideal schema of capitalist transformation of agriculture. As the later capitalising countries have not followed the similar path of dispossession of large masses and institution and spread of paid labour in agricultural production, the family owned small scale agricultural producers have sustained their continual existence on the basis of such qualities despite adapting to the general structure of commodity

production. What is more, as we will see more explicitly through the discussion of the theories that attribute significant importance to these factors, it is argued that these qualities provide the petty agricultural producers a measure of resistance against the trends of capitalist restructuring in agricultural production, enabling them to defy the forces moving them towards differentiation by selling the land and moving out of rural areas in order to enable the transformation of agricultural production into capitalist farming.

Now that we have seemingly laid out the definitional parameters of the subject of our study, we should now situate the problematic it poses within relevant theoretical structures. Even though we have noted earlier that the survival of small-scale family owned agricultural production units using the unpaid family labour also poses a problem under the heading of ‘development’ for the liberal school of thought which assumed a linear reproduction of the ideal models of capitalist development, I prefer to handle the theoretical issues related with my research question within the general body of Marxist theoretical discussion because I do not think that the developmentalist approach has relevant tools to deal with the variety of non-conventional relations of production and reproduction that we can encounter within this specific social formation and reduces the discussion to the problem of scale and divorces certain ideological preconditions that the petty agricultural producers may hold from the material basis of the reproduction of their particular form of organization of production and reducing them within the dualistic conceptualizations of tradition vs. modernity, which have been criticised before in the initial section of this chapter.

Contrary to this simplification by the liberal paradigm, what has been come to be labelled as the “peasant question” within Marxist tradition has been enriched by the various positions which have held the specifics of the organization of production within the context of petty agricultural formations as definitively important. Although the “peasant question” originated from the same problematic of developmentalist approach, the explanation of the expected differentiation of petty agricultural producers and how should they be dealt with until the imminent

differentiation took place; it inevitably evolved to encompass the debates about how the specific form of production organization continued to survive, the class nature of this form, what kind of function they served within the structure of capitalism and how did this supposedly 'transitional' category adapted itself to the operation of capitalist organization.

I will organize my discussion of the extents and particularities of the positions developed within Marxism around the "peasant question" under four headings. First I would like to point out to the classical writings of Marx and how Engels formulated the peasant question during the latter half of 19th Century. Under the second heading I would like to lay down the contributions of Lenin and Kautsky who have written at the beginning of 20th Century, shaping the discussion on the particularities of small-scale family owned agricultural production unit and how these functioned as advantages for the petty agricultural producers as well as the discussion on the obstacles to the capitalist transformation of agriculture. I would also like to include the writings of Chayanov under this second heading, despite the decidedly non-Marxist basis of his position. His inclusion within the theoretical review of Marxist positions on the subject can be justified by two important points, one of them being the thoroughness of the analysis he developed of the specific conditions of small scale agricultural producers as units of production and as specific forms of organization while the second one is the degree to which his analysis influenced different positions which tried to incorporate Marxist analysis in their framework.

Under the third heading I would like to deal with the positions developed on the "peasant question" after the 1960s when the issue of capitalist transformation of agriculture was once more brought into forefront with the advance of "green revolution" where the global restructuring of capitalism has led to increasing productivity and extension of the capitalisation of agricultural production. Another cause of renovated interest on the discussions on the issue of petty agricultural producers was the increasing politicisation of rural masses around the world. This political aspect motivated a rising interest from sociological rural

studies on the issue of class basis of these masses. The theoreticians dealing with this issue were largely influenced by Marxist terminology and could also be considered as contributing to the Marxist theoretical analysis of the petty agricultural producers. I would like to include discussion on this issue which has taken place in Turkey during the 1970s as the positions illustrate the theoretical differences in the analysis of the reality surrounding the organization of agricultural production within a later capitalized country, while they also enable us to better understand the political dimension of this discussion.

The fourth and final heading is designed to involve the current developments in the field of theoretical approaches to the “peasant question”. Following 1980s, a categorically different approach on the issue of the class position of the small scale family owned agricultural producers has started to gain a greater ground with stronger adherents and more liberated basis of discussion. The generally adapted position up till that point proposed that the “peasants”, as the units of this type of organization of production was defined, should be handled as a general category and should be considered as being exploited within the operation of capitalist system. The views that gained further ground following 1980s attacked these propositions in two grounds. The first one was the categorical generalizations of small-scale agricultural producers as the increasing diversity in the forms of the reproduction of the production unit was emphasised and the second one was the assumption of their being exploited categories as they were argued to possess different means of exploitation themselves. This latter criticism derived from several other discussions, foremost of them being the feminist critique of the concept of “household” as a homogenous and egalitarian unit.

Another important dimension that should be added within the category of contemporary discussions is the new approaches that have developed through the considerations of the trans-nationalization trends. A group of rural sociologists have formed a separate branch of study of agricultural production claiming that the international dimension of the shaping of food systems requires a central

position in the analysis of agricultural production.³ This perspective also brings our attention to the importance of processes associated with increasingly diversified food production and how this affects the agricultural production more and more as trans-national food corporations having a rising influence over the organization of agricultural production (Llambi, 1993). These developments result in introduction of both increasingly differentiated and new products to cultivate and new forms of relations for the petty agricultural producers as the trans-national corporations extend their influence in direct and indirect forms.

Now let me deal with these propositions in more detail and point out certain texts which could be considered as seminal under each heading.

2. 3. 1. Classic Marxist Writings

The writings of Marx himself on the subject of agricultural production are rather limited, as he focused his analysis on the relations of production taking place in the emerging urban-industrial context which he considered as the place where the perfect example of the predominant form of relations that capitalism operates on could be found. Thus the form of proletariat deprived of ‘his’ own means of production on the one side and capitalist organizing the production and hiring the labour by means of wage was expected to be replicated throughout every realm of the social organization of production as the capitalism’s inevitable expansion developed more and more (Mann & Dickinson, 1978).

This kind of bold assumptions on the assumed trajectory of the social transformation and lack of specific attention to the particularities in the peasant

³ A group of rural sociologists who were in search of incorporating the new discussions in various fields of social sciences on the trans-nationalization processes also shared a theoretical ground on the premise that the framework of “rural studies” were limiting in considering the full extend of the relations that shaped the reality of agricultural production and consequently it should be studied together with its ties to the processes of food production, marketing and consumption. Their continual correspondence on these issues has resulted in creation of the “Research Committee on Sociology of Food and Agriculture” in the XIIth International Sociology Congress in 1990. For further information on the how these premises are formulated and the framework of the committee, please refer to Bonanno, 1991.

form of organization that was still widespread under the countries which have already taken up a process of capitalist industrialization such as France could be attributed to two separate reasons. The first one could be the rate of capitalist ascendance that Marx and Engels were developing their theoretical framework. Goodman and Redclift (1985) note how they were impressed by the enormous leaps that the industrial development took in the middle of 19th Century, which was unlike anything that came before. So during the heyday of capitalist emergence and global restructuring, perhaps it was feasible to assume the “transitional” nature of peasantry and that other countries will follow the process of differentiation that has taken place in England without much delay.

The second possible reason for the inattention on this subject could be the relative un-effectiveness of such a social category in determining the outcome of events of the day or the future, as Duggett (1975) puts it. I consider this point more important as the small-land owning family units as a social category were in fact quite irrelevant for the political project that Marx and Engels were following. Marx and Engels’ theoretical structure depends to a large extent on the struggle to enable the proletariat to become more fully aware of the capitalist society which runs on the subjugation and exploitation of itself and overcome this social organization in order to free the productive potentials of the whole human kind in a non-exploitative, egalitarian society. I believe the fact that ‘peasants’ as a social category based on ownership rights (on land as a means of production) have no place in such a social project is more important than their supposedly ‘transitional’ nature under capitalism for the negligence of the extensive investigation of this subject.

2. 3. 1. 1. Political Analysis

The observation that gives precedence to political insignificance over the temporality of the form as the reason for the lack of attention on the issue is strengthened if we consider the open hostility and criticism towards the role the small land-owning agricultural units can play in shaping the course of history in

the polemical writings aimed at political propaganda such as *The Communist Manifesto* and *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*. The critical regard in the political analysis can also be taken as the sign of the omission of extensive discussion on the specifics of this form in works with deeper theoretical value.

In examining these two works which lay the basis of Marxist understanding of the class position of the petty agricultural producers, we have to once again consider the thematic discussion that has been prevalent up to this point in the formation of theoretical framework of this thesis: the social transformation taking place during the course of the 19th Century. These two writings have been produced as a response to a political need when the European societies were going through rapid changes and the struggle to build a preferable outcome of these changes for the working class needed an analytical understanding of different currents and actors within these social processes. *Manifesto* was both a product of and a guideline for action in the revolutionary wave of 1848 which enforced the working class to form its independent class position and *Brumaire* was an analysis of political situation in France in the beginning of 1850s where the nature of social organization of production was turning around in a brisk pace and the class allegiances resulted in peculiar structure where an independent intervention could break up the tenuous balances in a favourable manner. Let me evaluate a little bit further and set down what these writings have to offer for understanding the social basis of the existence petty agricultural producers.

The first of these political texts, *The Communist Manifesto* was published in 1848, written by Marx and Engels (2001) at the request of the Communist League. It was born as the political programme of this organization when a revolutionary upheaval was sweeping through much of the Europe (Ashley & Orenstein, 2001: 186-187). The course these popular struggles took in this period has brought about the clear demarcation of a working class from the class of owners of means of production and this initiated the initial separation of the camps of two classes as the working masses carried on the revolutionary struggles whereas bourgeoisie has taken its place as a defender of the establishment wherever it could seize

social power. Perhaps because of the fact that it was written at the cradle of the emergence of the working class struggle as an independent form, to this day, *Manifesto* seems to be the most clear evaluation of the capitalist society and the political programme that proletariat should take to overcome it.

In the *Communist Manifesto*, the peasants, as the remnants of the feudal social organization, are described as a conservative group despite their being against the bourgeoisie like the proletariat (59-61). This analysis derives from the perspective that sees the development of capitalism as an unstoppable progressive force which revolutionizes and advances the production process in such a manner that all the groups within middle strata such as the craftsman, petty producer, shop owner or peasants find that their particular skills are rendered useless and can not compete with the extreme level of productivity that the capitalist production employs. Thus the peasantry and its similar categories fight in order to survive in the face of the advance of capitalism, whereas proletariat is a genuine product and exists within this system. In several places the conservative struggle of “middle segments” are deemed futile and they are simply expected to be differentiated into two groups that divide the bourgeois society: the bourgeoisie and proletariat.

A final principal on the issue of the organization of agricultural production that can be driven from the programmatic suggestion of the *Communist Manifesto* for the proletariat is present at the very first position of the ten positions that are suggested as necessary steps in order to achieve a revolutionary change of mode of production: the abolishment of ownership on land (69-70). There are other propositions for the organization of agricultural production in these ten positions, such as establishing industrial armies in agriculture, operating agriculture in accordance with industry etc., but the particular point of abolishing the ownership on land becomes important in further discussions on Lenin’s tactics in the Bolshevik Revolution and the question of to what extent the allegiance he built with the small land-owning agricultural producers could be followed in order to succeed in a communist revolution.

The second leaflet I would like to discuss which could be considered as important in determining the Marxist analysis of small land-owning agricultural producers is *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1963). This text has been prepared by Marx in 1852, and was published in a monthly magazine, analyzing the political and social situation of the French society, focusing its analysis around the *coup d'état* of Louis Bonaparte in December 1851. According to Engels in the preface to the third German edition (6-7), the French political scene as well as its historical development necessitated a particular attention because it was the premiere example of the bourgeoisie taking power and transforming the society through a revolutionary change by using the political structure. As the analysis of this leaflet try to show, it is also a context where proletariat develop genuine initiatives to change the social organization according to its own goals, but nonetheless is defeated by bourgeoisie with the allegiance obtained from the middle segments such as the small land-owning units.

The main argument provided in the political analysis of the coup of Napoleon III is that a weak bourgeois class could not overcome the contradictions within society and rule in its own name, so a peculiar figure who seemed to base his power to middle segments of the society emerged to carry out the executive operations in favour of the further development of capitalism. This aberration derives from both the conservative nature of small land-owning units and the impossibility of their developing a class-like basis of solidarity in order to defend their own interests. It is important to emphasize the framework of analysis of the developments in the French society during the middle of 19th Century, because when we do not consider that the rule of Louis Napoleon provided the conditions for the strengthening of capitalist development without changing the relations of production themselves in the specific units of production, we may miss the bourgeois nature of it. A similar obscuration is still quite common when populist projects based on sympathy for the small scale land-owning production units are considered as bases of resistance against capitalism and mistakenly applauded as progressive movements by those who claim to favour the interests of the working masses.

Now let us look closer into how the particular form of a bourgeois power based on “popular support” came into being and how exactly it operated in the interests of bourgeoisie as explained in Marx’s analysis of the historical developments in France as a country where an emergent bourgeoisie can not find enough power to transform the totality of social organization of production and have to face the remnants of older social organization which are inevitably co-opted within the operation of the new system. While the social power of bourgeoisie became significant in France at the end of 18th Century as it overthrew the power of aristocracy in the French Revolution, its relative weakness also became evident through various incarnations of monarchic restorations trying to re-establish the privileges of landed aristocracy. The latest revolutionary uprising in 1848 was carried out against the rule of Louis Philippe of Orleans who was in fact supported by an exclusionary highest segment of bourgeoisie, what Marx called the financial aristocracy (1963: 15). When the rule of this particular group was overthrown by a joint struggle of lower segments of bourgeoisie (the emerging industrialists), traders, peasantry and working class; none of them were strong enough to be able to carry out their own program in shaping a new social organization.

It was this particular situation that has given the small land-owning units an unprecedented importance in determining the political situation. As the bourgeoisie had to face both the advancement of proletarian struggle and the resistance from the remnants of the previous mode of production, its inability to seize the power has led it to support a heroic figure claiming to represent the peasant masses, “Napoleon le Petit” as Victor Hugo called him (quoted in Marx, 1963). The conservative basis of Louis Napoleon’s rule rested on his reaffirmation of land ownership in the form of reassertion of small-allotments distributed after the first French revolution. By being the champion of small land owners, he could maintain the illusion of acting within their interest while the conditions of production kept changing in a manner that diminished them. The support that Napoleon gained was not a result of a simple misjudgement but

derived from the characteristics of the small land-owning production units. Let me quote Marx's excellent analysis of the nature of this form of organization of production in its entirety, as it contains valuable insight for understanding the politically conservative role that this segment plays:

The allotment farmers are an immense mass, whose individual members live in identical conditions, without however, entering into manifold relations with one another. Their method of production isolates them from one another, instead drawing them into mutual intercourse. This isolation is promoted by the poor means of communication in France, together with the poverty of the farmers themselves. Their field of production, the small allotment of land that each cultivates, allows no room for a division of labour, and no opportunity for the application of science; in other words, it shuts out manifoldness of development, diversity of talent, and the *luxury of social relations*. Every single farmer family is almost *self-sufficient*; itself produces directly the greater part of what it consumes; and it earns its livelihood more by means of an interchange with nature than by intercourse with society. We have the allotted patch of land, the farmer and his family; alongside of that another allotted patch of land, another farmer and another family. A bunch of these makes up a village; a bunch of villages makes up a Department. Thus the large mass of the French nation is constituted by the simple addition of equal magnitudes – much as a *sack of potatoes* constitutes a potato-sack. In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of the other classes, and that place them in an *attitude hostile toward the latter*, they constitute a class; in so far as there exists only a local connection among these farmers, a connection which the individuality and exclusiveness of their interests prevent from generating among them any unity of interest, national connections, and political organization, *they do not constitute a class*. Consequently, *they are unable to assert their class interests in their own name*, be it by parliament or by convention. They can not represent one another, they must themselves be represented. Their representative must at the same time appear *as their master, as an authority over them*, as an unlimited governmental power, that protects them from the other class, and that, from above, bestows rain and sunshine upon them. Accordingly, the political influence of the allotment farmer finds its ultimate expression in an Executive power that subjugates the commonweal to its own *autocratic will* (1963: 86-87). (– *all the bold text are my emphasis*)

Although certain points in the text such as the ability of application of scientific methods in small land-ownership will be discussed with reference to current developments of the relations of the trans-national capital develop with petty agricultural producers, other changes such as the improvements in communication does not refute the arguments based on the nature of organization of production of small land-owning agricultural production which inhibits the development of division of labour. This text, perhaps, provides us with a very clear illustration of the Marxist analysis of the organization of small land-owning agricultural production. Analytically, the self-sufficiency is regarded in a negative manner and the development of division of labour is favoured as a force to bring “luxury of social relations”. Politically, a basis for a class position for the petty agricultural producers is deemed impossible and their political aim is identified as creating an image of a “master” that can subjugate them under ‘his’ own will. As we will see, these points are all together negated by the positions developed concerning the “peasant question” in the second half of 20th Century, which also claim to be situated within Marxism. I will question the relevancy of the arguments of these writers to Marxism, who celebrate the qualities of self-sufficiency as a basis for resistance against the “advancement of capitalism”, or seem to think that there could be a possible role for this social category in a project of human emancipation.

Before advancing to the analysis provided by Marx on the field of agricultural production in studies with deeper theoretical investigation, I would like to call attention to one final argument present in *Brumaire*. I have already mentioned that Marx claims that the basis of agricultural production in France have changed despite the protection of the form of organization of production on the unit basis. This point becomes important in the discussions concerning how to determine the capitalist nature of a social formation. In analyzing the social conditions under Louis Bonaparte, in what will become a famous quote Marx likens the attempt to replicate the Napoleonic glory to a farce; Marx points out to the fact that despite the rhetoric of restoration of the order of Empire, the history has advanced to a

point where capitalism has become the inescapable mode of operation in France. The institutions of effective taxation and bureaucracy, along with capitalist rents on the basis of which the petty agricultural producers are forced to operate and mortgages that are so widespread have subsumed whatever political advantage the small land-owners had and they have become “slaves of capital” as the bourgeoisie secretly took the place of feudal lords in becoming the vampire who sucks the life-blood out of them (1963: 89-90).

This point about the “pauperization” of the small land-owning agricultural producers is also supplemented with the argument that they are unable to compete with the extremely effective large-scale ‘scientific’ production of capitalist farming, so they are forced to differentiate against the competition. This stance refers back to one of the main positions that are defended in manifesto, as well as being taken up more thoroughly among the analyses of Capital. Even though it could be argued that further developments have rendered this position obsolete, we can perhaps still salvage an understanding from the final argument presented in this sub-section about the existence of capitalism, which will become important in our discussion about the later-capitalizing countries. In order to distinguish and demarcate the existence of capitalism in a given social organization, we need to look at the general rules of operation and the specific units of organization of production may not confirm to the ideal case of capitalist organization even though they may be governed under the rule of its operation.

2. 3. 1. 2. Theoretical Analysis

When the revolutionary wave of 1848 has resulted in failure for the working class, Marx was put on trial in Germany and found guilty of igniting rebellion and insulting authorities, so he had to leave the continental Europe for an exile in England. The leaflets on the class struggles in France (also including the *Brumaire*) was written in the first years of this exile, proving the anticipation of another revolutionary wave to come and turn the conditions of his life around. As no other upheaval seemed to arrive in near future, Marx is reported to have

become more and more secluded and diverted his attention in examining the deeper governing mechanisms of capitalist mode of production (Coser, 1971: 63-65).

In an environment of extreme isolation and devotion (Coser, 1971: 83-86), Marx started undertaking the task of uncovering the laws of operation of the capitalist society. Unfortunately, he could not complete what he saw as his *chef d'oeuvre*, and only the first volume of *Das Kapital* was published in 1867 while he was living. Engels edited his drafts after his death and published two further volumes: the second volume was published in 1885, while the third appeared much later in 1894. One of the basic themes lying under the analysis of *Das Kapital* was the effort of explaining the contradictions that exist within the operation of the system which created the periods of crises as the pretext of revolutionary upheaval. This could be held as the proof that despite the disillusionment resulting from the outcome of 1848 revolutions which could be argued to have led to Marx's seclusion and unwillingness of participating in revolutionary activity during the 1850s, he has not abandoned the quest for a radical struggle to change the social reality, but rather diverted his energies into searching for the conditions and right time for such an endeavour.

In consistency with our argument that the object of our study, the small-land owning agricultural producers are only given attention to in accordance with the relevancy of their social existence has to the overall project of social transformation that Marxist thought holds, the analyses relevant to our discussion on the situation of this social segment comes up in extensive examination at two different points in *Das Kapital*. The first is in the end of the first volume where Marx discusses the immediate pre-history of capitalism and how the capital and labour had come into being as separate social entities, where the stark illustrations of the atrocities that have been committed at the very origins of capitalism are portrayed in order to show the lies of the ideologues who paint rosy pictures of evolutionary development at the basis of capitalist system.

The second analyses that I will present deals more directly with the small land-owning agricultural producers as Marx is examining the matter of ground rent towards the end of the third volume. His analysis of ground rent takes it as a specific field where capital is realized and demonstrates how enforcing acceptance of land-ownership becomes another mean for appropriating the surplus product of the agricultural labourers. This section and the specific attention that is paid to small land-owning agricultural producers is also important in understanding how the institution of capitalism in general transforms the basis of operation of the production units, such as ‘peasant landowners’, in a manner that their activities are governed by the laws of relative profit.

As mentioned earlier, the Eight Part of first volume of *Das Kapital* is devoted to uncovering the immediate roots of the emergence of capitalist mode of production in England. This part is not only important because of Marx’s criticism of the process of “primitive accumulation” that the political economy depicts, favouring a group of would-be capitalists in claiming that they were a hard working bunch of people who knew how to save money and thus accumulate in order to gain the chance of further developing their wealth by employing others. Although the forceful nature of the disappropriation of free peasant landowners that lies underneath Marx’s refutation of this account illustrates have provided an important point of discussion for the scholars dealing with the later-capitalizing societies and whether the violent transformations taking place in those contexts can be likened to the concept of a “primitive accumulation”; this chapter is also important for our discussion in the sense that Marx believes it to represent an ideal case of capitalist transformation of agriculture.

When explaining the processes of how the agricultural producers have been removed from the land to constitute an army of labourers without any property ready to work for the industrial production, Marx notes that the bound peasantry of Middle Ages have already disappeared in England in the last part of 14th Century (2000: 681-683). “Petty proprietors” have taken the place of serfdom with the right of property over the respective lands they cultivated; despite the

feudal forms of the names these privileges were constructed. The capitalist transformation of the organization of agricultural production has attacked these independent small scale producers by introducing the capitalist notion of property through the appropriation of common lands (2000: 706-708). Besides the violent expansion of the lands controlled by the landlords who were after the rents that would be paid by rising capitalist tenants, the dissolution of small land-owners was also the result of their inability to compete with the new form of production organized in the large-scale capitalist farms, as the capitalist tenants grew their profits exponentially by the rising prices for the wool and diminishing prices of the metals through which they paid their rents and wages whereas the small land-owning agricultural producers could not retain valuable and fertile land and could not keep their herds either as they were denied access to common lands as pastures for them.

As argued before with regard to the passages from *Manifesto* and *Brumaire*, despite studying the ideal case of capitalist transformation of the organization of agricultural production, Marx firmly believed that this process of differentiation under the pressure of competition will be replicated in other parts of the world as the capitalism further developed. In the preface to the first edition in German, he calls out to the German reader who might think that the processes in England may not be relevant for themselves, and tells them that it is in fact their own story that is being told⁴. Marx then goes on to argue that it doesn't matter if particular contradictions between the classes have actually developed in a given society, but what really matters is the tendencies of capitalist production which move towards inevitable results. The belief in the reproduction of the same processes is without doubt when he claims "a country with a more developed industry can only show a less developed one an image of its own future" (2000.: 16-17).

The chapter on ground rent in the third volume of *Das Kapital* also starts with a dismissal of the importance of any form of organization of production of

⁴ "De te fabula narratur!" as quoted from Horace.

agriculture other than the capitalist farming. Marx tells us that he approaches the field of agriculture the same as any other field of capitalist production where investment is made in search of average profits and assumes the dispossession of rural workers is already present. Emphasizing the fact that the establishment of capitalism is still a process that is going on, he continues to remark:

It is thus completely immaterial for our presentation if we are reminded that other forms of landed property and agriculture have existed or still exists besides this. This reproach can affect only those economists who treat the capitalist mode of production on the land (...) not as historical categories but eternal ones (1991: 751-752)

Nonetheless, Marx still included a specific sub-heading devoted to the analysis of *share-cropping and small-scale peasant ownership* in his chapter on the “the genesis of capitalist ground-rent”. In the complex analysis provided about the nature of ground rent through out sixth part of volume three, the development of ground rent is associated with the differential fertility rates that lands provide according to factors such as the quality of the soil and position of the land in regards to water sources, etc. and also the investments made by tenants in order to raise the fertility factors. The mechanisms of operation of diverse kinds of differential rents with regards to changing relations between land owners and capitalist tenants is examined in detail, but what is peculiar for the subject of our own investigation is the principle that once the system of differential rent is introduced, the value of the land is bound to be factored in the all kinds of production processes even when it is not organized on capitalist principles.

This point is made through the argument that the law of capitalist property is instituted throughout the whole society and when a small-landowning agricultural production unit is passed along in generational terms, the value of the land is calculated in its commodity form and the head of the production unit has to pay other inheritors their shares, or buy components of land. The money transaction in this process is raised from mortgage, so a third party is introduced in the organization of further production. The same can come to pass when small land-

owner wishes to buy or rent extra lands for further cultivation. The repayments to the mortgagee are determined through considering the rent that the land would generate as a form of capital, so average profit depending on the value of land enters into the organization of production, making it comply with the capitalist laws of motion forevermore (Marx, 1991: 938-940).

Even though this logic seems a little bit confined within the parameters of a particular form of heritage regime and the systematic pressure to factor in the commodity value of the land could be thought as exempt in contexts where traditional forms of heritage rules operate together with a low level of formal administration over the lands. Regardless, the more important point in this analysis seems to be the introduction of financial debts which are in fact an extrapolation of the differential rents of the lands that the small land-owner possesses. Despite the fact that Marx did not believe that scientific methods of agricultural production could be introduced within the framework of small land-ownership, this specific argument can still be developed with regards to the rising levels of capitalization of agricultural practices in order to explain the capitalist nature of the organization of agricultural production in later-capitalized countries which hold a large base of petty agricultural producers. We can borrow this argument for explaining the theoretical problems that we will be facing when explaining the continuous adaptation of industrial means of production by the surviving petty agricultural producers and claim that this process has indeed acted as the base of their subsumption under the laws of capitalist operation through indebtedness.

There are some further points that could be considered crucial for the bases of a Marxist understanding of small land-owning production unit in the sub heading on *small-scale ownership*. While Marx's handling of the small-scale landowning unit is clear in regarding it as a small capitalist, he nevertheless points out to its ability to lower the overall prize of its product as he also controls his own labour:

The smallholding peasant's exploitation is not limited by the average profit on capital, in as much as he is a small capitalist (...) The only absolute barrier he faces as a petty capitalist is the wage that he pays himself (...) and he often does so to a physical minimum (1991: 941-942).

The control that the petty agricultural producer has over the payment 'he' keeps for himself and 'his' ability to lower it below the level of average wage by increasing the poverty of the unit of itself, is argued to give it an advantage to obtain more land for cultivation without considering the average rate of profit. This particular point is developed in the analyses that argue for the self-exploitation of the peasantry as the basis of its continued existence and provides an inspiration for the various forms of theoretical standpoints which liken the position of petty agricultural producers to working class and labourers, despite the determination of Marx own framework in the other direction.

2. 3. 1. 3. Engels after Marx

When the labour struggle once again started to grow, Marx and Engels joined the *International Workingmen's Association* (the "First International") and Marx had become the leader of this organization after a while. Together with the publication of the first volume of *Das Kapital*, he reached quiet a fame in continental Europe and though his attention was taken away by the bickering within the *International* against Bakunin's followers, his ideas and programme was used to organize workers in Germany by Lasalle with a mix of romanticism and hidden admiration of Bismarck (Coser, 1971: 65). After the *International* watched helplessly the butchering of Paris Commune in 1871, it fell apart through the discussions between various camps. Despite corresponding with the socialist leaders of Germany (such as Bernstein, Bebel and Kautsky) Marx had once again subsumed his solitude in the 1870s, in which he also had to deal with illness and exhaustion from old age (Coser, 1971: 67-68). From that point on it was up to Engels to follow through their collective work and oversee the development of political movements sympathetic to their cause.

In 1875 followers of Marx and Lasalle in Germany had joined to form the *Socialist Workers Party of Germany* (SAPD) which became a large force within the worker's struggle in Germany. Soon, similar large parties had begun to form all around the European countries whose leaders had become influenced by Marx's writings. After Marx's death in 1883, Engels assumed the responsibility of working on his unfinished writings and developing an official doctrine for Marxism (Zeitlin, 2001: 191-193). The socialist and social-democrat movements in various countries turned to Engels for correspondence on the contemporary issues they faced and how they should interpret Marx's writings on various political issues that they have to develop responses to. The work of Engels that I would like to take up for discussion in this section is the result of his elaborations on one of the issues that these political movements have faced, *The Peasant Question in France and Germany* (in Marx & Engels, 1984) as he put it.

By the 1890s, it has become apparent that Marx's predictions of linear diversification of the small land-owners into capitalists and labourers has been taking longer than estimated and the social democrat parties in countries with a large population still engaged within small agricultural production units wondered how could these people be reached and how could they be won to the revolutionary program of proletariat (Bernstein, 1996: 23-24). The French socialists adopted an agrarian program for the party in 1892 which attempt to co-opt the right over land ownership for 'peasants' and also assure sharecroppers and tenants the ownership of their own lands, thus gaining the support of various segments of the rural population for the party's overall programme. Engels criticized these attempts fiercely in the article he has written in 1884 as a response to rising questions on the issue from his followers in both Germany and France.

The first point of his criticism was to reassure the transitional nature of the small land-owning, but in addition to the argument on the competitive disadvantage of the small scale production, Engels developed the analysis on the pressure of indebtedness by pointing out to the changing conditions of production for the

small land-owning producer, who is not independent anymore since the 'natural economy' is broken down and the household obtains industrial goods from the outside and no longer able to reproduce its own subsistence (as argued in Goodman & Redclift, 1981: 5). The usury, taxes, mortgage and the other forms of money extraction increasingly impoverishes the small agricultural producer and this already makes them open to socialist propaganda according to Engels. He claims that even though the promise of free ownership of land is carried out when the socialist parties take power by the repayment of mortgages and land distribution for sharecroppers; as the economic conditions of operation of capitalism dooms the small-scale production, the same conditions will repeat themselves in no time and small landowners will find themselves under the pressure of financial debt (Marx & Engels, 1984: 470).

Another important basis of his criticism is that, besides the abandonment of the need for fundamental rejection of property and allotment of land in order to further develop the productive capacities of human labour; this new position renders all the different class positions within the organization of agricultural production onto same level and considers them as one subordinated group. In several places Engels condemns the position of French populists who propose that although the small peasants and tenants may be using wage labour, they are only forced to do so because they themselves are exploited by the usurers and rents. He cries out that the foremost responsibility of the revolutionary party and its program is to free the wage labour and any position that could contain a promise of the continuation of this form of relation of production should be outright rejected (Marx & Engels, 1984: 472).

Besides the contribution it brings on the issue of how the destruction of petty agricultural producers' subsistence structure submit them under the circuits of capital through indebtedness, and emphasize on the differences between the positions of various forms of organization of agricultural production; this text is also important in that Engels admits the importance of winning the rural masses in support of the revolutionary programme of the proletariat in the countries that the

small scale producers are not completely differentiated yet. He openly admits that the French socialists are right in claiming that “no lasting revolutionary transformation is possible in France *against* the will of the small peasant” (Marx & Engels, 1984: 470, italics in the original).

But in contrast to the concession that the French socialists seek to give, which he believes is garnered to win the agricultural producers in the short term and will lose them again when they see the gains they obtain deteriorate quickly; basing his argument on the experience of Danish socialists, Engels believes winning them over to co-operative organization is possible. He warns that it is important that the socialists should assure the small land-owners that no forceful appropriation of their lands will take place. As the comparative technological and productive advantages of large-scale production are already evident, the organization of production on the seized lands of large tenancies and idle lands will be persuading enough for the petty agricultural producers of the advantages of giving up their isolated and tiresome production in order to join the co-operatives (Marx & Engels, 1984: 471).

2. 3. 2. Developments in the Analysis at the Turn of the Century

Perhaps because of Engels’ polemic in *Peasant Question* which appeared in 1894 or the publication of Marx’s writings on the ground rent under the title of *Das Kapital, Vol.3* the following year have been influential, or perhaps it was the result of rising necessity to address the situation, but the peasant question came into the attention of socialist thinkers more frequently after the death of Engels in 1895 and the theoretical analysis of the peasant question was taken up more seriously at the beginning of the 20th Century. For various currents within the socialist movement the burning necessity to position the agrarian populations within the political organization of class struggle, which was becoming more and more effected by the various translations of Marx and Engels’ writings, have become increasingly apparent when the next wave of generalized working class

movement started to become more stronger and willing to take power in order to shape the society in its own view.

During this period a two fold discussion have taken place among the Marxists concerning the peasant question. The first was the realization of the need for modification in the simplistic assumptions of Marx and Engels' writings about the impending dissolution of small landowning producers because of their disadvantages against the capitalist production. The Marxists had to deal with the fact that the process of differentiation was not happening in the short term, leaving them with the necessity to explain the continual existence of these supposedly transitional forms of organization. Also related with this issue was the second task of trying to explain and conceptualize the social relationships that existed in the rural contexts of later-capitalizing countries where the ideal forms of capitalist organization did not take place.

Both endeavours of trying to explain the survival of petty agricultural producers and make sense of the different social structures that inhibit the capitalist development in agriculture in the later-capitalized countries were undertaken with the aim of trying to solve the question posed by Engels as how to position the different segments of rural population within the class struggle and how to win the support of the masses engaged in agricultural production for the revolutionary program of proletariat. Perhaps because of the political basis of the issue, the two separate analysis within the Marxist framework that I would like to discuss in this section are developed by the leaders of two different political currents; the first one being Karl Kautsky's seminal investigation of the possible advantages that land-owning small agricultural units may have in postponing their differentiation and the second one written by Vladimir Lenin, who had undertaken an attempt to prove the overall capitalist structure of the Russia at the beginning of 20th Century.

I would also like to include the analysis of Chayanov of the "peasant economy" in this section, despite the fact that he was clearly not a Marxist theoretician.

Chayanov's work on the small land-owning agricultural production unit was based in the anthropological surveys carried out in vast lands of Russia at the end of 20th Century and he devised an analytical framework which proposed that the principles that governed the operation of the family-owned enterprise are authentic to the organization itself and these formed a distinct basis of logic that we should consider in order to understand the actuality of the rural organization of production which is not transformed by capitalist production. I think it is important to elaborate on his approach because the strong basis of his analysis of the relations of production in the setting of an isolated rural context and empirical strengths that he presents in his investigation have become very influential later on in the discussions within Marxist literature when a populist strand have emerged after the 1960s. With the support for the "survival" of peasantry and the peasant movements as a basic feature of them all, which was legitimized explicitly or implicitly through the Chayanovian assumption that the "peasant economy" forms an independent basis of resistance against the operation of capitalism, the proponents of this peculiar form of hybrid Marxism that we will deal with more extensively below; have dominated the rural studies for a long time in the later half of the century. But before advancing to the later developments in the field, let us first elaborate on these three works that were produced at the beginning of the 20th Century.

2. 3. 2. 1. Kautsky's *Die Agrarfrage*

When the influence of Marxism started to gain popular ground in 1890s, Karl Kautsky was one of the leaders of the Social Democrat Party of Germany (SPD) as mentioned earlier. This party was thought as the biggest organization of the socialist movement at the time and was the centre of many theoretical debates concerning the revolutionary struggle of working class. Kautsky met with Marx and Engels as a young intellectual in 1881 and later spent 5 years from 1895 to 1890 with Engels in London, developing his theoretical aptitude on the field of Marxism that Engels was trying to build as a coherent body of thought (Zeitlin, 2001: 191). After the death of Frederick Engels in 1895, Kautsky arguably

became the most prominent living figure of Marxism as one of the chiefs of the theoretical structure that was adopted by the most powerful socialist organization of the time, but also because he continued the work of trying to organize and publish Marx's notes and drafts as volumes of *Theories of Surplus Value*.

Kautsky was perhaps the first Marxist who explicitly formulated the problematic of continual existence of the small land-owning agricultural producers. In the book *Die Agrarfrage*, which Lenin claimed to be the most significant contribution to the economic literature after the third volume of *Das Kapital* (1964: 26), Kautsky tries to uncover certain factors that could have provided a comparative advantage for the family owned small allotment farmers which would explain the delay in the realization of differentiation in agricultural production foreseen by Marx and Engels. Despite noting that there had been an increase in the small scale land ownership at the end of the century, Kautsky still believed that there will be an inevitable concentration of the lands as 'the industrial production of craft goods and the use of cash in rental arrangements' transform the economy and put the 'peasantry' under the pressures of dispossession as discussed before (Banaji, 1976: 7).

The first among the factors peculiar to the organization of agricultural production which could contribute to an argued advantage for the small land-owners according to Kautsky is the non-reproducibility of land as a primary factor of agricultural production. As the arable and fertile land and the lands that are actually cultivated with access to feasible water sources are limited, the pre-existing property relationships held over them constitute a greater weight for their owners than they might have had within the field of traditional capitalist production. Here Goodman and Redclift (1981) argue that Kautsky proposes that the penetration of capitalism could take place without the transformation of property relations, somehow finding a way of operating while leaving the small land-ownership intact. This particular proposition is crucially important for the theoretical positions developed later in the century which had to accept the existence of petty agricultural production as a functioning component of

capitalism and try to explain the mechanisms of its operation and the nature of the relationship between the petty agricultural production as a form of organization of production and capitalism as the mode of production in general.

The other factor that Goodman and Redclift argue that Kautsky emphasized in considering the peculiarities of the agricultural production is the shortages of labour (1981: 9-10). As the family owned production units also contain a source of labour power within their structure, they hold an advantage against the larger, capitalist establishments. Kautsky's analysis of the areas where the small land-owning structure survived is said to lead him to the conclusion that, as this phenomenon is present at places where the small agricultural producers abandoned the attempt to compete and have left cultivating the specific crops that the capitalist producers have specialized on those areas, the predominant role that the small agricultural production units were playing was to provide labour for the capitalist farms and their survival was the result of this advantage, rather than the goods they produce for the market. Ecevit (in EBA, 2008) further elaborates on the issue of the labour that the petty agricultural producers are able to supply, relating it to the non-continual labour demand of the agricultural production, both because of cyclical and seasonal qualities it has. As the labour that family run small agricultural production units are contained on a continual basis, it could be hired out on the basis of wage or lent through a share-cropping arrangement when the need for labour on the agricultural production in the capitalist rises.

Another particular point that Kautsky spotlights concerning the advantages that the small land-owning units may have through their control over the labour factor is underlined by Ecevit (1999: 45) as he claims that the 'middle peasants' are subjected to the worst conditions among the whole agricultural producers because they intensify the use of their labour in order to compete with the technologically superior capitalist farming. This point is also confirmed by Banaji (1977: 32) when he cites Kautsky's formulation of "overwork" and "under-consumption" as the twin slogans for the 'peasant economy' to survive under capitalism. These two points of flexibility of labour to work outside of the household unit as the need for

its employment in the agricultural production being cyclical and seasonal and the flexibility over the control of its application and reproduction as a basis of its survival will become extremely important in the latest discussions about the nature of the petty agricultural organization of production as they are used for emphasizing both the labour like and capital like qualities of this social categories.

I would like to add two further arguments that could be considered as Kautsky's contribution to our understanding of the nature of existence of petty agricultural producers within capitalism, as mentioned by Ecevit (1999: 43-45). Ecevit points out that the small land-owning units and larger capitalist organizations within agriculture have a complementary nature despite their contradictions in Kautsky's view. This point is also supported with the proposition that the existence of small scale agricultural producers within capitalism has an oscillating position between trends of land concentration and dissolution. This is perhaps the first acknowledgement of a modification of the basic premise of linear dissolution for the small land-owners in Marxist analysis, beyond the explanations for the "delay" in their disappearance.

Ecevit also remarks that Kautsky has pointed out the role of the state's support for the survival of petty agricultural producers. The role that state support can play in keeping small-land allotments and the family-organized labour on them intact is also an important theme in the discussions of the mid-century and many left-populist strategies advocate for larger state intervention in their support of the small land-owning units. Many of these movements claim their association with Marxism through a reading of Lenin's theses on the independent role of financial capital in subsuming different forms of organization of production under the operation of capitalism so let us briefly consider the bases of these approaches in Lenin's particular contributions on the subject of the organization of agricultural production under capitalism.

2. 3. 2. 2. Lenin and *Development of Capitalism in Russia*

Lenin was a young radical studying law at the University of Kazan at the start of the final decade of the 19th Century, when he was expelled because of his involvement with the student protests. He was already interested in Marxism at the time but only had the chance to study the *Das Kapital* volumes 1 and 2 extensively after he was expelled and he became a Marxist and a member of the local political group when he came to St. Petersburg in 1893 (Cliff, 1975). When he was arrested in 1895 he started studying industriously in order to produce a comprehensive document analysing the conditions of Russian society. He had engaged in reading both theoretical analyses on the issue of features of social formations and collections of empirical data on the actuality of Russia at the day.

The result of these extensive studies was published in 1899 when Lenin was in exile, with the title of *Development of Capitalism in Russia*. The main aim of Lenin in this work was to prove that capitalism was developed enough in Russia to govern the operating mechanisms of the social order in a polemic with the Narodniks who claimed that Russia was a backward country where the Tsarist oligarchy was ruling with dictatorial force, oppressing the popular and undifferentiated masses. As well as trying to prove the existence and power of capitalism in Russia through economical data on the development of markets and industrial workforce, Lenin also investigates the organization of agricultural production and the differentiation that has been taking place within the rural population in great detail.

Although Lenin admired Kautsky as a great theoretician, his treatise of the conditions of agricultural production under the capitalism developing in Russia as a later-capitalizing country does not bear any references to Kautsky's advances in the theoretical understanding of the field because *Die Agrarfrage* was not available for Lenin to read while he was preparing his book, as he regretfully notes in the foreword of *Capitalism in Russia*. In his criticism of Narodniks' views, Lenin instead borrows heavily from Plekhanov, adding a greater emphasis

on the class differentiations among the so called “rural masses” and also the destructive process of the development of a capitalist market as a governing mechanism on the petty-enterprises and crafts holders; among them the petty agricultural production units. Cliff argues that the “official Marxism” in Russia supported by the regime against the Narodniks and the earlier radicals like Plekhanov were critical against the romanticist populism of social revolutionists by praising the progressive nature of capitalism, and Lenin’s attention to the damages of the development of capitalism and the harsh nature of the emergence of class differentiations in rural context in *Capitalism in Russia* is also a criticism against the “official” Marxist traditions which fall into the same fallacy of postponing the immediacy of a proletarian revolution in Russia (1975: 58-65).

The version of the book that has reached to this day by the republications of the Soviet State is the second edition that Lenin revised in 1908 and it seems that in his analysis on how to understand the differentiation process in the organization of agricultural production in Russia at the time, Lenin has added the discussion in the volume 3 of *Capital* on the introduction of money-rents as a form of rent generated on ground (1964: 173-174) but his overall argument in explaining the operation of different mechanisms that the development of capitalism in Russia generated is still based on the argument of development of a home market and the transformations that this process entailed. The analysis of the organization of agricultural production is also based on this transformation and he strongly insists that an independent or contradictory basis of existence is not possible for the small agricultural production units or the “community” that they form:

The system of social-economic relations existing among the peasantry (agricultural and village-community) show us the presence of all those contradictions which are inherent in every order of capitalist competition, the struggle for economic independence, the grabbing of land (purchasable and rentable), (...). It is these contradictions that show us clearly and irrefutably that the system of economic relations in the “community” village does not at all constitute a special economic form (“people’s production,” etc.), but is an ordinary petty-bourgeois one. Despite the theories that have prevailed here during the past half-century, the Russian community peasantry are not antagonists of

capitalism, but, on the contrary, are its deepest and most durable foundation. The deepest – because it is here, (...) that we see the constant formation of elements of capitalism within the “community” itself. The most durable – because (...) the transformative effects of capitalism (...) manifest themselves here most slowly and gradually (Lenin, 1964: 172).

Considering this passage, it is clear that Lenin accepts that capitalism as a mode of operation already governs the organization of production in agriculture despite the gradual form of the absolute transformation of the forms of production, which he also believes, will inevitably happen. The categories that he formulates to understand this transitional period derives from his analysis of the statistical data available on the size of the lands owned by independent agricultural production units and their budgets. The main categories he proposes at the conclusion of the chapter on “the differentiation of peasantry” are the bigger peasantry, amongst which the capitalist farmers emerge, middle and lower-middle peasantry and rural proletariat (Lenin, 1964: 172-194), although he also talks about the remnants of the older system as the large scale landlordism and bound peasantry as obstacles for the development of capitalism in agriculture.

The use of wage-labour in small land-owning agricultural production seems relatively important in his categorisation and demarcation between positions among the smaller land-owners. Goodman and Redclift (1985: 6-7) argue that it is important to note that Lenin’s perspective the differentiation of classes in agriculture did not take the form of land concentration but instead actualized through the ability of some of the middle-peasantry to capitalize on the chances provided by the emergence of the market who had become a source of demand for other’s labour. They quote Lenin saying as the middle-peasants who employed wage-labour developed as a general segment within the rural population at the one hand, a significant proportion of the rural population had become small land owners who came to depend on the wage gains as the major part of their incomes. Goodman and Redclift believe that this categorization had led to Lenin’s search for an alliance with some peasant groups later on in the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

Another aspect of Lenin's analysis which will become important for the later discussions analyzing the organization of agricultural production later-capitalized countries is the obstacles in front of the free development of capitalism in agriculture that he discerns. Ecevit (1999: 42) remarks that these phenomena such as the large scale land-ownership akin to feudal relationships, bonded labour-service, slavery and usury are seen as the remnants of the feudal system. We will see later on in the discussion developed around the peasant question in the middle of the century on understanding the transition to capitalist organization of agriculture that the positions are separated according to the emphasis they lay on which of these factors determine the reality of the particular form of capitalist organization takes in the rural context of the later-capitalized countries: one position favouring the role played by the merchant or usury capital and the other emphasizing the importance of the persistence of feudal-like relationships.

I think that the importance that Lenin placed in the differentiation of positions among the rural producers has been lost to a great degree in the following decades as he himself has reformulated his political positions if not abandoned his theoretical basis altogether with regard to the middle peasantry and the capitalist basis they present. When the revolutionary break-down of the Tsarist regime have become a pressing situation, Bolsheviks have sought the support of rural masses by propagating the strengthening of land-ownership rights. This tactical turn around is argued to have been crucial in obtaining the political power after the October Revolution in 1917. Following this turn of events, despite acknowledging the undeniable success of such a tactic, Lenin was nevertheless criticised by the western Marxists at the time, such as Rosa Luxemburg and Herman Gorter of trying to develop a generalized theoretical position on the alliance of working class with land-owning production units in the rural areas⁵.

⁵ For an extensive criticism of Gorter on how Lenin was trying to introduce a general proposition of alliance with the land-owning peasantry into the Marxist revolutionary program of the working class struggle through his new found prominence within the third international and his evaluation on why such an alliance is impossible for the "more developed" western nations see his "Open Letter to Comrade Lenin" (2004).

It seems that after the revolutionary wave of 1917 started to retreat and Lenin has started to realize that the expected revolutions in Germany and other countries with larger and politically more organized working class movements in the West were not succeeding in capturing the state power, he turned his attention to justifying how they were able to triumph through concentrating on the supposed particularities of the Russian state. In a foreword to French and English editions of his book *Imperialism*, which were published in 1920, Lenin modified his earlier belief that the real revolutionary death blow to capitalism will be dealt in its very heart and claimed that the colonies and semi-colonies were the weakest link in global capitalist control and the revolution will start from these ‘backwards’ countries (2001: 29-34).⁶

Following the death of Lenin in 1924, many of the later nationalist movements have claimed to be “Leninist” through a radical reading of his analysis on imperialism, arguing that because the imperialist powers were exploiting under-developed nations, the revolutions against capitalism would emerge from popular struggles inside these countries. The class positions and the independent revolutionary program of the working class was also abandoned by the “official” Marxist parties and many other Marxian currents while they undertook the task of trying to legitimize new formulizations for alliances for the working class and land-owning agricultural producers. A Russian agricultural economist named Chayanov became popular in these justifications as he proposed an understanding of the rural populations as an egalitarian, toiling and quite undifferentiated mass, which presented the perfect ally for the working class when the proponents of the “anti-imperialist popular struggle” added to this view the proposition that the

⁶ This book has been first published in 1916 and in it Lenin already laid the foundation for this later extrapolation. The analysis presented in the book attempts to explain the relationship between “colonial” and expansionist desires of the capitalist states and the logic of operation of capitalism. Through the disputed empirical evidence he takes from Hobson, a bourgeois economist and reaches to a controversial conclusion that the new stage of capitalism is characterized by the merging of banks and industrial corporations to create the financial capital, which is characterized by a tendency to export investments rather than goods. The money form that the exploitation takes turns the masses in the colonial and semi-colonial countries into the real proletarians within the system.

financial capital exploited the toiling masses altogether in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. So let us now briefly mention the works of Chayanov as he will also become an important figure in the later discussions of within the Marxist literature on the “peasant question”.

2. 3. 2. 3. Chayanov’s *Peasant Farm Organization*

Following the first decade of the 20th Century, Alexander Chayanov started to become a prolific academic figure specialising on the field of rural sociology. He engaged in numerous polemics with the prominent economists⁷ during the 1910s developing his unique handle on what he called the “peasant economy”. Chayanov was not particularly a defender of Marxism and the ‘progressive’ role attributed to the development of forces of production, so he had preserved his distance from the Bolshevik politics during the revolutionary years and focused his attention to perfect his defence of the uniqueness of the ‘peasant’ form of production organization.

He has published the result of his studies in 1925 under the title of *Peasant Farm Organization* which raised harsh criticisms from the Bolshevik Party organ. He published a complementary theoretical elaboration titled the *On the Theory of Non-Capitalist Economic Systems* a couple of years later (which was not translated into English until 1966) and his explicit claim that the family production units consisted of a “natural economy” separate from the workings of wage labour and the implicit criticisms his work presented against the Stalinist policies of forced collectivization and increasing the agricultural product (Shanin, 1986: 5-7) was enough for him to be accused of working for a made-up secret “Labour Peasant Party” in 1930, which resulted in 1932 with a sentence of 5 years in labour camps. When he was released in 1937, he was interred once again with similar accusations and shot to death this time over.

⁷ Chaynov mentions that the criticisms of the likes of Litoshenko, Propokovich, Kontrat’ev and many others have been important in fine tuning his analysis and motivating him for writing a comprehensive elaboration of his perspective, providing a wealth of empirical data to support this analysis (1925: 33)

Before advancing to the specifics of his analysis, we should be aware of the richness and extent of the data that the documents that Chayanov based his analysis on. Thorner (1966) elaborates the vastness of the empirical research that Chayanov's theoretical framework was built upon. He points out to over four thousand volumes of statistical and economical data on village organization that Chayanov examined which were gathered at the end of the previous century by the Tsarist regime. According to Thorner, the research that has resulted in the collection of these data was related with the reform attempts of the regime in the middle of the century and the land reform law of 1861 as a part of these attempts. A wave of provincial and district assemblies under the title of Zemstvos were build in order to carry out the modernization of the land owning system according to the new law and transformation the organization of agricultural production. The only actual program that the Zemstvos were able to carry out was the launch of a massive administrative initiative which thousands of intellectuals and social reformers joined in order to carry their enlightenment ideals to rural populations. The comprehensive grasp of Chayanov over the social, demographic and economic realities of agricultural production units was the result of his access to the results of this great research project.

The specific qualities that Chayanov discerns in the organization of peasantry which in his view provides the particular basis of its existence an independent nature which could not be understood in terms of capitalist organization are two fold. First of all, he claims that the 'peasant' organization does not seek profit. This in part results from the fact that it is also the centre of the familial reproduction unit, but it more importantly is a consequence of the drudgery nature of the agricultural work (Shanin, 1986). According to this proposition, the amount of production actually undertaken by the 'peasant' household is exactly the same amount required for its reproduction. Because the agricultural work is so hard to carry out, the 'peasants' can not be made to produce more when they have enough for their own consumption, so there is no surplus to speak of in order to obtain a profit.

The second basis for the particularity of 'peasant economy' is the various effects of the demographic cycle. Ecevit (1999: 45-47) emphasizes how the control that the agricultural units have over the amount of work force by generational reproduction of labourers becomes important in the subjective determination of optimum points of production for the 'peasants' in Chayanov's framework. The level that a household considers as sufficient amount of production changes according to the measure of labour available to it, but this level can change depending on a variety of factors. For example, if the unit finds available land for expanding its production, then it will increase its demographic basis, producing more children in order to work, but the rise in the number of people in the household will also propel the family to increase production in order to satisfy a growing need of consumption.

The generational aspect of the demographic cycle also assures that the peasant communities remain egalitarian when we examine an extended period of time. Chayanov argues that even though a large number of children as available source of labourers provide an advantage for a given household as they would control greater amounts of lands and produce more compared to others within the community, none of the family units are able to maintain this advantage in the long run because as the head of the household passes away, the lands are divided amongst a greater number and the inheritors will remain with small allotments, similar to other units in the village.

Although Chayanov's analysis is obviously based on the consideration of small agricultural production units and the communities in isolation and ignored the relationships they entered with the changing structure of the economy, his basic premise that 'peasant economies' operated on a different logic than capitalism inspired many theorists in 1960s and 1970s. We should point out to the criticisms against Chayanov's work that despite his claim to explain 'peasant economies' subjected into commodity circulation, the data he presented is mostly of closed

economies where no significant influence from the outside is present (Mann & Dickinson, 1978: 469-470, especially the discussions in notes 11 and 13).

Goodman and Redclift (1981: 7-8) also criticizes the negligence of hired labour (both hired by the household and sold outside by its members) and labour sharing among the households and the persistent advantages such mechanisms might provide for the households who control significant amounts of land. Because of these criticisms that ignored to deal with the relationship a household maintains with larger social and economic structure, the proponents of Chayanov in the popular debate on peasant question at the second half of the century felt the need to modify his analysis despite keeping the idea of a peculiar logic that 'peasants' have outside of capitalist logic of operation. Now, we should perhaps briefly mention the social conditions that brought about a popularity of these neo-populist views and the debate on the issue itself.

2. 3. 3. Popular Discussion on the Peasant Question After 1960s

2. 3. 3. 1. General Debate on "Peasant Movements"

After the setback that two world wars and the destruction that they have brought in much of the geographies under the control of capitalist organization of production, popular struggles and the influence of Marxism once again surfaced in the 1960s. The anti-colonialist movements in lands controlled by Western powers and Maoist uprising of the small land-owning masses in China have inspired a new interest in Marxist rhetoric but as we have already mentioned in previous section, these movements have significantly diverged from the pure proletarian struggle that Marx and Engels championed, so although the radical leftist politics in this period have kept the terminology of Marxism to a large extend, their theoretical basis and analytical standpoints depended on a re-visioning of communist politics that Marx and Engels offered.

The radical and popular struggles with a self-proclaimed socialist tendency that gained prominence following the independence of new nation-states in Africa, Asia and Latin America in 1950s have developed within these later-capitalizing countries. As we have defined the characteristics of these social settings under the second heading of this chapter through our discussion of development studies as having a large proportion of the population in rural areas and engaged in petty-agricultural production. As the capital in these countries is meagre and not powerful enough to transform the relations of production in all the spheres of the social organization it controls and also had to compete with more advanced forms of capitalist organization on the global scale, capitalists in these countries had to resort to extracting the surplus produced by petty commodity producers, who were forced to extremely devalorize the labour applied in this production by the expansion of the price scissors in favour of the industrial products, by the help of despotic state interventions controlled in alliance with the interests of landed oligarchies, or by the strengthening of the exceptional power that peculiar actors such as usurers or traders had over the small producers through their control of financial resources, which is uncharacteristic for the normal organization of capitalist market.

Resulting from the great pressure and severe exploitation of the petty-agricultural producers in this context, many popular movements against the established order have developed based on the struggle of the agricultural producers, who also happened to be either small land-owners or landless masses who were co-opted into an agenda of preserving the small land-owning system of organization of production. The need for branding the ideological expression of these struggles within Marxist terms was the result of the influence that Soviet Union of Russia had over these movements and the support it provided. According to Shanin, the revolutionaries who participated in the popular movements throughout the world were also affected by other developments in this time such as the Vietnam War against United States, the Cuban Revolution and the Chinese Cultural Revolution movement (1989: 7). We should also add to these notes that many of the texts that were important in the discussion on the subject at the beginning of the century

such as excerpts from Kautsky's *Agrarfrage* and also Chayanov's *Peasant Economy* were translated into English for the first time during the late 1960s and early 1970s along with some works of Marx like *Grundrisse*. This has presented new opportunities for the specific re-visioning in question along with re-igniting intellectual interest on this debate.

As mentioned in the previous sub-section, the re-visioning of Marxist analysis of the social class position and the role that its struggle could assume have depended on a particular reading of Lenin's thesis on *Imperialism* and incorporating Chayanov's analysis that conceptualizes the small scale agricultural production as a distinct "peasant mode of production". We have discussed above that Lenin's views proposed that financial capital played an important role in subjugating different organizations of production not build upon capitalist relations under the pressures of extraction by the capitalist mode of production ruling over them. We have also pointed at his suggestions that the existence of a capitalist market is the determining factor in the transformation of non-capitalist production organizations in relation with our elaboration on *Development of Capitalism in Russia*. These two ideas have provided the spring board for these re-visioning attempts, together with the later developed doctrines of support for national liberation struggles under the premise of their being anti-imperialist by the Third International after Lenin's death, when it began to work as the guardian of actual political interests of Russia as a nation state.

The reasoning behind this new elaboration of class struggle and dynamics of capitalist mode of production was built upon the understanding of 'imperialism' as an action of domination by certain countries (foremost the USA, as it was the sworn enemy of USSR) and not a dynamic of the capitalist system itself, which was also a characteristic of the actions of the capital raised in later-capitalizing countries. The financial capital representing the 'imperialist countries' formed a relationship of post-colonial exploitation over the later-capitalizing countries and together with the 'comprador' elite in these countries, they were suppressing and exploiting the people in general and small land-owning agricultural producers in

particular, expropriating their surplus. The Chayanovian proposition that ‘peasants’ formed a distinct logic and an egalitarian mode of production, outside of the operation of capitalist mode of production; which were once again popularized by the works of Teodor Shanin (Bernstein and Byres, 2001: 5-7), were essential in providing a theoretical basis for the claim that the so-called ‘peasant’ movements had an anti-capitalist nature.

Together with the radical views of Dependency School in development studies, another realm that these movements have found a reflection within the academy was the rural sociology. Many of the rural sociologists with left leanings and Marxist tendencies have diverted their attentions to studying the mass movements originating from rural areas of later-capitalizing countries and the conditions of small land-owning agricultural producers in these countries. The coordinated efforts in this vein assumed the name of “peasant studies” and were very much concentrated around the *Journal of Peasant Studies* which started to be published in 1973. In their review of the 27 volumes of articles published in this journal Bernstein and Byres (2001: 4) also mentions other sources of intellectual influences that have raised their enthusiasm on the subject and provided insight for their perspectives as E.R. Wolf’s *Peasants* published in 1966 and Barrington Moore Jr.’s *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*.

The constituting reasoning common within the ‘peasant studies’ was that this social form of production organization had a specific logic of operation of its own. Whether the particular subject of study was the transition from a pre-capitalist social organization to a capitalist one, the harshness of the conditions of living for the poor in the rural areas of the third world, the relations of exploitation imposed by the land or capital owners, explanations or the political movements originating from countryside, class differentiations within the majority of agricultural producers were left aside and the term peasant was offered in order to lump various segments which constituted the actuality of relations of agricultural production within a single ‘popular’ category which was suppressed by ‘capitalism’ identified as one of the system’s several symptoms.

The general implicit assumption shared by all was that the small agricultural production unit held an autonomous quality to it; was not governed directly by the mechanisms of capitalism and consequently, could not be understood simply with the concepts that we use to understand capitalist mode of production.

Within the studies and discussions about the specific organization of agricultural production which is based on the family owned small scale land and uses non-capitalist features such as un-paid family labour and factors provided not from market but through means of subsistence in the production process as well as the reproduction of the family labour; a branch developed emphasizing the commodity producing nature of the unit, and the concept of petty-commodity producers was offered in order to differentiate this approach. This view insists that capitalism determines the conditions of existence of the particular unit of organization of production, although the operating mechanisms and the logic of operation differ from that of a capitalist unit of production. By emphasizing the non-commodity features of the production and reproduction within a petty-commodity production unit, this view still preserves an alternative basis of existence and subsequently affirms a possibility of resistance against capitalism founded on the interests of the small land-owning agricultural producers.

Several criticisms have been developed against the general assumptions of 'peasant studies' proposing an independent existence for the 'peasant mode of production' which is also shared up to a degree by the scholars who favour the concept of petty-commodity production to emphasize the effect of the circumstances resulting from the operation of capitalism in externally conditioning these units of production. These criticisms were based on the argument that the family owned small scale agricultural production units should be considered with the same conceptual tools that are applied to any form of production organization in a capitalist society, an argument that could perhaps been seen as an attempt to reclaim the Marxist grounds of analyzing the specific form of organization of production common in the later-capitalized countries.

I will present these positions under the final sub-section concerning the ‘peasant’ question but before advancing to these most contemporary discussions, I would like to present the reflections and developments that this popular discussion had in Turkey. The heated discussions that have developed within Turkey during this period, which have also gathered international interest and contributed to the overall academic debate on the issue of understanding the conditions of existence of and social relations surrounding the petty-agricultural producers, will be helpful in both illuminating the details of different political positions who deal with the revolutionary ‘peasant movements’ and also will put the arguments and frameworks presented in the analysis of the historical developments concerning the agricultural production in Turkey.

2. 3. 3. 2. Debate on the “Peasant Question” in Turkey

The revolutionary wave that has mobilized large segments of population in different parts of the world also had its reflection in Turkey. The process of rapid economic development that Turkey was moving through starting from the 1960s had brought about the transformation of certain social relations at a brisk pace as well, especially in the rural areas (Oral, 2006: 47). The introduction of agricultural machinery that has started in 1950s have become more widespread, producing an excess of labour in the rural settlements, setting off new tides of rural-to-urban migration. Also, the development policies needed a bigger and steadier market, so along with the introduction of multi-party system which boosted the populist politics in order to gain votes from the rural majority; the subsidies and heavy state intervention in agricultural production as a regulator and supporter meant the living conditions of agricultural producers were in a state of constant change.

The hasty transformation of social relationships along with rising expectations for a larger share of the overall wealth created had resulted in radical leftist politics gaining popular ground, in an escalating manner up till the end of 1970s. The political movements which often originated from the urban centres were puzzled

over the ages old question of how to integrate the masses of petty agricultural producers into their revolutionary strategy, which in turn defined the nature of the struggle they were pursuing. The institutional form of radical leftism was organized around the Turkish Workers Party (TİP) and influenced by Marxist tradition; its analysis proposed that the capitalist nature of Turkey necessitated them to favour a working class movement in order to achieve social change. But as the populist re-visionism of 'peasant movement's became more influential in the international arena and the youth mobilized became more radical in struggling against the worsening conditions of intermediary segments, the thesis of democratic revolution against the "backward" or non-genuine form of capitalism that existed, in order to open the way for the 'true' form of capitalism to develop, gained ground.

This latter ideology had become a tool for the political organizations of the radical youth to connect with the emerging rural movements. Similar to the context of other later-capitalizing countries, the analysis of "peasants exploited by imperialism" had provided the framework for the political propaganda to gather the different rural segments around a common struggle, based on the preservation of the small land owning structure. The intellectual and academic debate on the 'peasant question' in Turkey was than, based around how this form of production organization could be preserved. The proponents of different sides all accepted the similar premises that the capitalism in Turkey was flawed in some manner and although they proposed that their position favoured the development of working class movement at some point through the alliances it would build around these analyses; they nevertheless diverted their attention to forming the political ground for 'peasant movements'. Therefore, the discussion revolved around the issues of how to define the conditions of the petty agricultural producers and the conditions of their exploitation as the focus that their struggle would be build against.

The initial debate shaped around the nature of the system of agricultural production in Turkey. In a comprehensive elaboration of rural conditions in Turkey, Boratav was among the first to argue that the predominant form of

organization of agricultural production was small land-owning family production. The lack of capitalist production in agriculture and the fact that the surplus that petty agricultural producers created were appropriated under extreme conditions of transaction for a source of primitive accumulation proved according to Boratav that a 'backward' form of capitalism existed in Turkey (Aydın, 1986: 182-186). Later on Keyder advanced this analysis through offering historical and theoretical background to the predominance of petty-agricultural production in Anatolia. As we will discuss in more detail below under the section of "historical conditions of landowning", Keyder reiterated some of the basic points of Chayanovian analysis and proposed that the scarceness of available labour in agricultural production compared to the abundance of arable land prevented any form of big land-ownership and concentration of lands (1983).

Erdost had strong criticisms against this view and conceptualized the system in Turkey as having significant semi-feudal characteristics instead. He criticised the source of empirical data that Boratav presented as the evidence of predominance of small land-ownership and instead claimed that large land-ownership together with bonded or share-cropping labour was the predominant form of agricultural production in the agricultural production, especially severe in Eastern and South-Eastern regions, which were characterized by a land-owning structure that was remnant from feudal times (Aydın, 1986: 187-189). Subsequently, Erdost's analysis inspired political positions favouring an uprising against feudal-like power structures so that a democratic society could emerge, allowing for capitalism to develop thoroughly, whereas Boratav's analysis laid more emphasis on the financial mechanisms as deprecating the conditions of existence of petty agricultural producers so it inspired political movements against certain actors of exchange and which imagined a democratic society by the removal of the influence of these actors, both the usurers and traders in the local level and 'imperialist powers' in Leninist view at the national level.

The issue of the mechanisms of exploitation once again came into attention after the 1980s when a new round of discussion developed briefly between Boratav and

newer social scientists criticising his analysis. When Aydın was writing a review of the discussion on ‘peasant question’ in Turkey, he criticised Boratav’s analysis as lacking a proper understanding of mode of production. He claims that Boratav advocates a form of articulation thesis in explaining the petty commodity producers’ existence alongside capitalism to which they are externally related through exchange mechanisms (1986: 184-185). Boratav answers these criticisms by claiming that his framework based on the appropriation by the usurer or trader capital does not exclude the relations of production and that the creation of surplus is presupposed in this view, placing it firmly within an understanding of capitalist mode of production (1986: 188-190).

Ecevit categorizes this discussion as market-emphasis and production-emphasis analyses (2001). According to this categorization, scholars like Ecevit and Aydın who paid closer attention to the relations of production within the agricultural unit argued against the special role attributed to traders and usurers in the exploitation of petty agricultural producers by Boratav, Keyder and other proponents who preferred to follow the commodities through chains of exchange and instead claimed that the exploitation was actualized in the production process through the control of conditions of production by “capital in general”.

In a recent detailed inspection of the claims of market-emphasis perspective, as consistent with his established positions, Ecevit rejects an independent basis for trading capital and claims they have been serving the industrial capital; but he extends his criticism in saying that even if the usury and trading capital did have an exceptional power over the small land-owning agricultural producers, their control could never reach over the production process because the land-owners were independent in the control over their labour and possessions; the agents of exchange only have control over the results of the production, they can not determine whether the producers want to expand or contract their production, or how they organize their labour power in other forms of income-generating activities (in EBA, 2008). This argument renders the control of market

mechanisms into a secondary position in theoretical terms, even if they had an extra-ordinary control over the product of petty-agricultural producers.

Even though the production-emphasis group paid greater attention on investigating the relations of production within the agricultural production unit, they nonetheless have fallen short in considering the theoretical significance of the structures of ownership that exist in this form which provides opportunities for controlling labour of others both within and outside of the household in an exploitative relationship. In his outstanding and comprehensive analysis of a tobacco producing village in Turkey, Ecevit notes down the most contemporary developments in the field of Marxist investigation of the petty-agricultural form of production organization which offer considerations on the exploitative possibilities that petty agricultural production unit offers but he shies down from adapting these views in his own analysis (1999). In his conclusion, he briefly mentions that petty commodity producers should be considered as a differentiated group of producers and not a homogenous group but he nevertheless rests within the views that are criticized by the latest group of researchers as being ‘peasantist’ because of their re-adaptation of the basic premises of populist or Chayanovian views that claim the agricultural producers are an exploited and depended category altogether (1999: 259). In order to understand the neglected opportunities that these recent arguments may present in our understanding of the reality of petty-agricultural producers, let us now deal with them in more detail.

2. 3. 4. Reconsidering the Concept of ‘Peasant’

Starting from the second half of 1970s, a new appraisal of the “peasant question” with different emphases has started to gain popularity. The new approach placed a greater stress on the commodity producing nature of the small land owning agricultural unit, and considering the advanced level of integration with and determination by the overall operating mechanisms of capitalism, attempted to surmount the ‘peasantist’ essentialism of the popular approaches of the era. Among the first essays that criticized the usage of a general term of “peasant” in

order to describe the social formations within the agricultural production and offering alternative terms for better conceptualizing the reality of the relations of production within specific forms of production organization that we find in rural context; we can count Ennew, Hirst & Tribe (1977), Bernstein (1977) and de Janvry and Garramon (1977) [The importance of the criticisms provided by Ennew, Hirst & Tribe is noted by Friedmann (1980: 160), whereas the other two articles are cited in Goodman and Redclift (1985: 4)].

The reasons for the discussion on the premises accepted by the views predominant at the time, such as the base of independent existence for the ‘peasants’ outside of the organization of capitalism which provided them a possibility of resistance; and the proposition of the concept of “petty commodity producers” as a replacement which accepted that the small land owning agricultural production units were fully integrated within the mechanisms of capitalist organization, but were still subject to suppressive and exploitative pressures from the system could be various. Among the possible motivating factors, we should consider the change in the political scene in what was called the “third world”, as well as the changes in the conditions of production themselves, which could be both observed at the local context and also through the investigation of the changes in the global organization of capitalist production.

When dealing with the changes in the political context we see that it became apparent as the 1970s advanced that after a significant number of national liberation movements have reached their goals by the recognition of independent countries and also achieving political power; and the popular movements of rural masses, in for example the Latin America have settled down either by the establishment of reformist populist governments or by military coups, the contradictions that existed in the rural context needed to be reformulated because the outcome of the new regimes that were created fell short of the expectations of radical left populists of the rural studies. The socialistic changes were not achieved and a new basis of revolutionary energy should be identified within the class structure of these populist regimes which could further the radical reforms

abandoned by the popular movements when they came into power. But perhaps the realization of the fact that the conditions of operation of capitalism governing the reality of petty-agricultural producers have been far more effective than the 'isolationist' frameworks suggested by dated references was more important in determining the specific form that the critique of "African Socialism" and Latin American politics took.

By the late 1970s, it became quite apparent that it was hard to imagine the rural production as an independent economic organization externally related to the operation of capitalism. In hindsight, Bernstein reluctantly admits that by 1970s, the level that commoditization has reached, in both the conditions of production and reproduction of the petty-agricultural producers have rendered the "peasant question" obsolete (1996: 46). The generalization of commodity production refers to the advancement of capitalist relations in later capitalizing countries and the broadening of their reach in the organization of agricultural production. This process has taken place without a complete transformation of the form of production organization in many of the contexts, through the establishment of wide-ranging official channels offering credit opportunities and support for further mechanization and capitalization along with the establishment of unified markets for agricultural goods.

Bernstein also points out in a later article, dated 2001, to the fact that trends of global restructuring of agro-food system; which we will be dealing in greater detail in the final sub-section of the theoretical chapter, have started taking shape during this period. The significance of this restructuring on the inter-national level for the petty-agricultural producers at the beginning was characterized by a wave of agricultural credit programs from the global finance organs, pushing reforms which would force the production of cash crops that would be exported to international markets rather than the traditional crops produced for domestic consumption (2001: 211-215). As already mentioned, we will be discussing these processes in further length in the following section, so let us now return to the

considerations on the conceptual and theoretical approach to small land owning family unit of agricultural production.

But the concept of “petty-commodity production” as a general category exploited by outside factors was not considered as a radical enough break from “peasantist” views and came under criticism from two different approaches. In what Shanin (1989: 10) describes as “defence of Marxism” and a return to the views of the Kautskyist programme of German Social Democratic Party, (the “Erfurt Programme”); the new approaches attempted to initiate a reconsideration of the class position of small land owning agricultural production units. As the first one that we will consider among these significant contributions, Friedmann argued that the family farm should be considered in similar terms with other forms of organization of production prevalent in capitalism as the complete integration with the market mechanisms of the small agricultural unit renders it to be a simple capitalist production unit (1978). The second and perhaps more controversial argument provided by Gibbon and Neocosmos (1985) emphasized the integrity of the operation of petty-commodity producers in capitalism and argued that as they contained the essential contradictions of capitalism within the organization itself, they should in deed be considered as capitalist forms of organization in nature.

Despite the fact that, they both criticised the earlier works of Bernstein, particularly his analysis of “peasantries” in Africa (1979)⁸, besides their general criticisms against the ‘peasantist’ views; he later endorsed these criticisms and attempted a combination of the arguments present in both works in order to develop a perspective emphasizing the class differentiations in rural context,

⁸ Although applauding the attempt of Bernstein to recognize the petty agricultural producers as “simple commodity producers”, Friedmann also complains that he uses this concept interchangeably with the concept of peasant, so in the end, he creates a confusion about the class basis of the petty agricultural producers, not condising the actual conditions of existence that differentiates the subject of his investigation (1980: 161-162).

On the other hand, according to Ecevit (1999: 62), Gibbon and Neocosmos criticises Bernstein as being unable to differentiate between the *phenomenal* forms that the mode of production (ie. the petty commodity form of production organization) and the *essential* relations of production lying underneath; a characteristic shared by all the ‘peasantist’ views, according to Gibbon and Neocosmos.

which provides our analysis with valuable insight and appropriate tools in order to make sense of the varying realities that have been encountered in the field work; which are handled as results of both inherent dynamics of organization of agricultural production in later-capitalized contexts but also the changing and strengthening effects that trans-national restructuring of the agro-food system have on these contexts. As we have presented the general development of the discussion on the materialist conceptualization of organization of relations of agricultural production up to this point, let us present some detail on what should be considered as the culmination of all the discussions up to this point, before advancing to analysing the context that frames our research question.

Harriet Friedmann's initial research was on the family owned grain farms, located on the great single-crop producing plains in the United States mid-west (1978). Here, Friedmann argued against the general perceptions about the advanced capitalist countries' agricultural organization which would believe that capitalist farming of enormous scale resting on wage-labour was the predominant form of operation. According to Bernstein and Byres (2001: 26) her presentation on the family owned farm organizations in wheat production opened a valuable opportunity for discussion among the two blocks of rural researchers which were divided by an assumed categorical differentiation between the characteristics of the social formation in the later-capitalised and advanced capitalist countries' agricultural production.

But more than that, her illustration of family farms as highly capitalized units of production existing within fully developed market networks in all aspects of factors of production has been critical in reconsidering the nature of small agricultural production units with a different theoretical approach. The importance of the full integration of the market mechanisms in Friedmann's work according to McLaughlin (1998: 33-34) is the effect this has on the reproduction of the production unit as a whole. As the changes in the market circuits directly effect the production in these conditions, the reproduction processes also start to be

determined by the market mechanisms, turning the unit of production into a capitalist unit in essence.

Although Friedmann later points out to the partiality of her argument about full market integration and admits that a basis for 'peasant' form of production organization could still exist where market integration in certain factors are limited (1980: 175-176), when Bernstein adopts the view that petty agricultural producers should be investigated with materialist terms, as forms of capitalist production; he criticises this proposed need for a full market integration in all the factors of production in determining the capitalist nature of the organization of production and he upholds Gibbon and Neocosmos' view that a generalized commodity production is enough to claim the essential mechanisms governing the operation of petty agricultural units even in later-capitalized contexts (1988).

According to Bernstein (1986) Gibbon and Neocosmos' view is based fundamentally on their distinction between essential and phenomenal aspects of capitalist mode of production. They claim that capitalism became the dominant mode of production when generalized commodity production has turned into the governing force of all organization of production. Within this organization of production individual units of production can not exist without submitting to the commodity circuits and the general dynamics governing the social reproduction as both their production and reproduction are dependent upon the commodities they use. This quality renders the specifics of the family production unit as phenomenal forms of expression of the contradictions of the existing mode of production, the contradiction between capital and labour that is internalized within the unit of production as they contain the places of capital as the land owner and the labour as they provide the primary source of labour (Bernstein, 1986: 5-8).

Both approaches also problematized the relations of production *within* the petty agricultural production unit. Together with the increasing criticisms developed by the feminist scholars towards the traditional 'peasantist' studies which were

accused of presenting a false image of unitary and egalitarian “household” (Bernstein and Byres, 2001: 23-25), the discern directed towards the division of labour along the gender lines provided an opportunity to elaborate the claims about the capitalist nature of the production within the petty agricultural production unit. Gibbon and Neocosmos believe that this division represents the division among the places of capital and labour within the unit whereas Ecevit (1999: 59-62) points out that the control over family labour by the patriarchal leader of the household is what provides the competitive advantage to the small scale family owned producers over the capitalist farmers in Friedmann’s view. Bernstein also deals with the persistence of petty agricultural producers against the pressures of differentiation in Gibbon and Neocosmos’ framework and explains it through the argument that the petty agricultural producers exploit the “spaces and places within the social division of labour [that are] continuously created as effects of the law of value in capitalist competition, accumulation and concentration” (1986: 25).

After the heated debates these interventions in the field of rural studies have sparked in the 1980s, the interest on the conceptualization of the class basis of the agricultural producers has curiously faded away. Even though the current round of protests by agricultural producers in the face of trade liberalization attempts on agricultural goods starting from late 1990s have brought the issue into our attention once more, most of the studies on the issue seem to lack an appetite for a comprehensive discussion on the theoretical issues related to the “peasant question”, the wealth of the tradition which we attempted to present up to this point. The rural studies with a critical perspective dealing with the agricultural producers in the later capitalized countries seem to reduce the analysis of current development with an emphasis on the rise or the threat of poverty. Most of the critical and creative theoretical energies on the field seem to be directed towards understanding the new developments stemming out of trans-nationalization process and the global reorganization of the agro-food system with a number of technical and organizational innovations from the Trans-National Corporations, which grant them a greater power to control the agricultural production than ever.

Even as Friedmann have become an important figure in the analysis of international agro-food systems (Friedmann and McMichael 1989 can be consulted for an example of her seminal work on the issue), and the scarcity of the work on agrarian relations of production by Neocosmos or Gibbon; Bernstein seems to be the only figure still carrying the criticisms that are represented in this subsection as the most advanced attempts at problematizing the class position of agricultural producers. Together with his endorsement of the discussions on the trans-nationalization process that I am about to present, he proposes a theoretical framework which emphasizes the many fold differentiations that exist or could exist between the positions of various petty agricultural production organizations based on how they ensure their reproduction; the point of whether they hire wage-labour on seasonal basis or they themselves sell their labour power outside of the household (both in agriculture or in other fields) being a critical issue among many others (2007). The differentiation among the petty agricultural producers based on the level of opportunities they can use as a unit of production is of premier importance in my analysis of the results of the field study, so I will surely return to this discussion while I present the conclusions of my thesis work.

2. 4. Trans-Nationalization Process

As mentioned earlier, there has been a major paradigm shift in social sciences starting from the 1980s. The strong influence of the dependency theory together with the later advances that have been developed out of its critique of Modernisation School are gradually losing their centrality in providing the problematics in understanding the realities of a world conceptualized through a categorical division. As the discussions on the phenomena that increase the interconnectedness of the social relations on a global level gain more popularity; the shaping dynamics and processes of the social reality which transcend any given national context are paid more and more attention to, as a part of our attempts of understanding the current phase of globalisation. While it could have

been justifiable to an extent for the earlier researchers to take specific countries as their unit of analysis in a fairly isolationist and protectionist era of state policy; it has been argued that today, a truly comprehensive approach to elaborating any aspect of the social reality needs to take the social and economic relations that are being shaped on a global scale into consideration.

Among the main arguments that are presented as significant processes that has brought about the current phase of globalisation are the technological advancements in the fields of transportation, communication and information processing which resulted in significant changes in which different geographies of the world are connected, eliminating most of the separations caused by the space and time distances but also improving the organization potentials with new ways of dividing the production process, connecting them in “flexible” ways and coordinating them on a global level (Harvey, 1997). In addition to these advancements, Friedland (1991) also emphasizes the significance of the technological developments specific to the food sector, where the preservation of foods through the processes of chemical or physical processing, introduction of advanced forms of packaging and specially organized transportation and storage facilities in contributing to the expansion of the reach of global food companies as they could buy the agricultural products in any geography and distribute them as food products in a wider market, paving the way of the formation of a new agro-food system which is constantly operating on a truly global level.

We should however consider a wider analysis of the changing social relationships in order to understand the driving currents behind these technological innovations and their application to facilitate a transformation of organization of relations of production. Moreira (1994) underlines the effect of the speculative crash of petrodollar crisis in 1972 in the increasing importance of financial capital, gaining a sphere of independent movement on a world scale. This enhancement of power “trans-national finance capital” is facilitated by and also enforces the trade liberalization and market deregulation by the introduction of *structural adjustment policies*. Ercan (2002) on the other hand proposes that we should

consider this process of change as a change in the form of the capitalist accumulation as the realization of capital in its total circulation within the national boundaries have entered an insurmountable crisis during the 1970s and the internationalization of this circulation emerged and gained ground as a possible answer to this crisis.

During the initial phases of the new conceptualization attempts dealing with trans-nationalization processes, there have been various criticisms. A powerful criticism presented by Goodman and Watts (1994) where they follow Mann and Dickinson (1978)'s analysis which claim that the nature of agricultural production inevitably prevents structural obstacles for a perfect capitalist organization, because of the incompatibility of production time with the necessary social value of the labour needed and the uncertainty of the profits to be expected, among other things. Thus, Goodman and Watts (1994) condemn the attempts that borrow the concepts of fordism and post-fordism and extend the analysis of the changes in the organization of industrial production uncritically to the organization of agricultural production. However, as the process of globalization has become more and more powerful, extending the trade liberalization practices to include agricultural products and food trade and the analysis on the new forms of organization of production have developed, presenting all forms of flexible relations that have been recently introduced in agricultural production, even those scholars who have been critical of the concept of "international food regimes", dismissing it as an extrapolation of market relations have accepted its merits; as for example in analysing the current political facet of the world capitalism (Araghi, 2003).

I have argued elsewhere that at the heart of the new trans-nationalization process and the new agro-food regime it initiates, lays the effects and activities of Trans-National Corporations (Başaran, 2007). Although the structural changes in the social conditions and state policy that neo-liberal restructuring effects the conditions and the level of the reproduction of the agricultural producers; the entrance and extension of the power of Trans-National Corporations is what

brings about significant change in the field of agriculture. A product and an agent of the currents of restructuration that the globalisation has brought, these entities present a new way of interaction with and organization of the agricultural production by the forms of centralized capital, even though the traditional forms of production organization are not transformed.

McMichael (1991) accounts the history of the emergence of giant food conglomerates which control a great percentage of the world market of chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides; and also the improved seeds, either genetically modified or strengthened through inbreeding of better kinds. There are also the food conglomerates that control the food processing and production processes, which extend their control over agricultural producers by either being the greatest purchaser in the market, or forming the monopolies over the required quality standards. There is also the third breed of Trans-National Corporation in agro-food system which controls the marketing and retail sector. These three kinds of conglomerates have been working in accordance in regulating the global markets and transforming both the conditions of production process and the patterns of consumption and perceptions on acceptable foods. Marsden (1992) also talks about the rising affectivity of these corporations through the vertical integration of the linkages between the sectors of agricultural and food production.

During his consultancy over this theses work, Ecevit have proposed a four fold categorization to analyze the changes endured within different segments of organizations of agricultural production as the Trans-National Corporations (TNCs) enter the field with their dominance over the markets in agricultural inputs and products as well as foods. The first one is the change in the capitalist farming, as the TNCs might attempt to invest in large scale agricultural production themselves, or they might be affecting the already existing large-scale capitalist farmers through a new form of dependency to the supplier of their production inputs and purchaser of their products as they become monopolies in many regions and fields. The production process organized by the capitalist

farmers may also be changing through the introduction of new varieties of seeds or other inputs; same with the other categories related with the TNCs.

Remaining three categories comprise of different positions that petty agricultural producers find themselves in according to the conditions of their relationship with the TNCs. At the other extreme of the capitalist farming done either by the TNCs themselves or by other capitalists who are in fully integrated relationship with them; we find the petty agricultural producers which continue their existence without any interaction with the TNCs. If we think that these producers could be isolated by the TNCs, or lack the capabilities necessary to enter in a relationship with them, than the question of their survival within the globalized food regime needs serious consideration. Can we still envision a source of “resistance” potential within their existence outside of the chains of global sourcing and marketing or should we consider that the chances for their reproduction are diminishing as their products are increasingly marginalized in consumption markets and their values compared to the products of the TNCs are decreasing more rapidly than the rising costs of agricultural production and maintenance; leading them to poverty and eventual dissolution of the petty agricultural production unit? There have been several examples in the fieldwork that I have conducted which points towards the latter.

The third and fourth categories are both petty agricultural producers who are in relation with TNCs and what differentiates them is the level of this relation. As with the capitalist farmer who gets the inputs of production from TNCs and sells the products to them, the petty agricultural producers in the third category are externally related with the TNC. These petty agricultural producers continue their production as usual but they get into contact with the TNCs through the mediation of the markets where they both purchase from the necessities for their production manufactured by the TNCs or sell to them their own products. As Yenil and Yenil (1993) argue that the TNCs have entered the agricultural structure of Turkey through the provision of inputs and Doğan (2006) notes the advancement of trans-national retailing companies’ advancement in Turkey, more and more

petty agricultural producers within this country have been incorporating the seeds, fertilizers and other inputs provided by these firms within their production and find the food producing or retailing TNCs to be the purchasers of their products when they market the result of their harvest. As the advanced interventions to the structure of these inputs enable the TNCs a greater control over the production process and the type and quality of the product; this indirect influence have perhaps been enough in reorganizing the agricultural structure of Turkey for the needs of TNCs.

The fourth and final category seems to be the most crucial amongst them, in order to understand the full effect and the potential of the TNCs intervention in the organization of agricultural production. The contractual relationship that the TNCs establishes with petty agricultural producers, granting them a direct control over the kind, quality, amount of product have been an increasing phenomena as the food processing and retailing TNCs seek to ensure the continuity and consistency of the products they offer to their customers. The contractual relationship that the company establishes with the petty agricultural producer who owns the means of production; mainly the farm land, but also the machinery and labour force too also sets the conditions of production too. The company may provide seeds and/or technical support, or may simply offer a claim to buy a certain amount of a product at a certain quality that the producer is supposed to provide. But moreover, the provision of certain kinds of seeds (and other inputs) together with the close surveillance over the production process turns this relationship into a form that necessitates that we reconsider our conceptual definitions of the relations of production that comprises a petty agricultural production unit.

This form of relationship renders two of the main problematics of the ‘peasant question’ as we have extensively discussed as referring to the problematic presented by the persistence of the non-capitalist forms of organizations in the later capitalized countries’ agricultural production: the ‘independent’ producer is now included within the capitalist production cycle directly and he (as in the

patriarchal head of the unit of household production) loses control over the production process. Goodman and Watts point out to how tightly even the contracts of the retailer purchases could be established in terms of quality of the product, dictating specific processes of production (1994: 35-36), but when we consider the one sided, monopolistic control over the possibility of genetic manipulation of the seeds takes the control of TNCs over the production process to such an extreme that the question of whether the supposed independency of the peasant household in determining its own conditions of work is overcome by the increasing control of the TNCs comes under serious consideration.

Another aspect of the contractual relationship that the petty agricultural producers establish with the TNCs is the new opportunity it presents us in elaboration on the class position of the petty agricultural producers. On this point, Ecevit (2006) continues the older considerations as he proclaims the “the low degrees of capitalization of productive and reproductive cycles of small peasants present important obstacles for them to integrate into the transnationalization of agri/ro-food sectors” and argues that such a relation will not be beneficial for the “peasants” which are considered a part of the “subordinate classes”. However, I would like to argue that the ease of a certain group of petty agricultural producers in entering and sustaining the contractual farming relation; along with the effective exploitation of the monetary or organizational prospects this relation provides offers us further proof on the capitalist nature of the petty agricultural production organization. I will discuss these points in more depth when considering the findings of the field research.

In order to summarize this section, I would like to point out that, with the development of a literature on the shaping effect of the Trans-National Food Conglomerates’ activities on the food regime and agricultural systems on a global scale, we can now discuss the problematics presented by the ‘peasantist’ approaches within the rural studies and also by the development studies and discussions on underdevelopment under a totally different light. As marked earlier, the theories that have dealt with the resistance of the non-capitalistic

'peasant' form of agricultural production in later capitalised countries had a particular focus on the question of why the transformation into a full capitalist form did not take place in these social contexts and the dynamics of the transformation of these 'peculiar' cases into modern organisations with institutional relations, foremost of which should be the predominance of wage-labour as a basis of rational accountability and effective production as is supposedly the case in other sectors under the capitalist mode of production. Perhaps, these questions are rendered irrelevant with the contemporary developments that have taken place in the organization of agricultural production.

Contrary to how the 'peasant' producers in later-capitalized countries' agriculture were depicted as relatively independent spheres of production lacking direct relation with the formal capitalist organisation, now together with the introduction of new forms of relations by the Trans-National Food Corporations with the small, family-owned agricultural production units; it has come to our attention that the most advanced forms of capitalist organisations are establishing contacts with the petty agricultural forms of production with all their non-commodity features remaining intact; such as the exploitation of un-paid family labour and the constraints over the markets on lands resulting from the traditional forms of land ownership. Perhaps the flexible mode of current capitalist organization which also encompasses the petty agricultural production organization within its circuits have provided a near definitive answer for the consistency of the small scale, family owned agricultural enterprise.

In order to present some backing and foundation for these bold statements, I have conducted a field research on a group of contract farming petty agricultural producers, which present a perfect example of the extreme form of contract relationship. I have searched for and chosen the subject of the field research as a form of production which have been transformed because of the introduction and provision of a new brand of seeds which changes the whole production process. In addition to this, the farming practice in the example is closely monitored and governed by the contracting firm, which represents a Trans-National Corporation.

I have conducted my research in order to determine the processes of adaptation by the petty agricultural producers and their attitudes towards these transformations, so that I would be able to discern the mechanisms that operate in the establishment of such relationships and how the petty agricultural units position themselves with relation to this new form of relationship with the corporate form of centralized capital. Now let me present a general framework for the agricultural relationships in Turkey in order to better illustrate and elaborate on the findings of the field research.

CHAPTER 3

INVESTIGATION OF STRUCTURES AND CONDITIONS OF TURKISH AGRICULTURE

Before advancing to the presentation of the research findings, I would like to present some background information on the context of agricultural relations in Turkey, because in order to understand the current conditions within which the agricultural production is realized in Turkey and the social relations that are established around the organization of this production, we should examine the historical setting in which they are shaped. Studying the historical background of the current agricultural structure provides a double set of benefits as it both equips us with a better understanding of the underlying mechanisms that have shaped the existing reality and it also illustrates the varying points of explanation between different theoretical frameworks present within the field. The first benefit identified is indispensable for our purpose of understanding the nature of the petty-agricultural production as a social organization. As it has been extensively argued under the first basis provided for the theoretical framework, we can only grasp the social reality through its changing nature; so we should investigate the different forms the subject of our interest have assumed through the historical developments it has been subject to and the formational dynamics that have shaped the conditions of its existence up till this day.

Engaging to construct an outline of the significant trends of historical development in the field of agriculture also contributes to my thesis on the basis of the second point mentioned, which draws attention to the significance that studying the narrations on historical background has for improving our understanding of different theoretical frameworks. Each theoretical approach

handles the historical trajectory according to its own set of concepts and constructs a varying recount of historical developments; at the very least providing different explanations for the phenomenon presented. The theoretical underpinnings of different analyses can perhaps be better delineated as the diverging points and arguments between them can be found in greater detail and more substantial form through the varying explanations they provide and the location of the unavoidable selective emphases that are placed.

As we shall probably witness examples of this phenomenon, it could be beneficial to consider how we could demarcate certain features of a historical depiction as containing and representing a distinct theoretical position. As the human interaction that shapes social reality consists of an countless multitude, the historian who wishes to build up a recounting of it is bound to pick out several incidents as being more significant than others, constructing a structure through which a meaningful explanatory schema is provided. Thus the theoretical positions of various researchers can be derived from the historical depictions that they offer, present in the emphases that they place, the larger significance they attribute to certain features within the social reality and the disregard for certain aspects of the mechanisms operating within the larger social structure and the simple leaving out of various elements that are included in other accounts.

So now we will be indulging in the historical background of how agricultural conditions have shaped in Turkey with the intention of discovering both the circumstances which have shaped the existence of petty-agricultural producers today and tools for discerning differing theoretical approaches that constitute the basis of our discussion and see how they analyze and explain differing forms of existence of family owned small scale agricultural organizations and how the material reality surrounding these organisations shaped them.

3. 1. Historical Conditions of Landowning

When dealing with the historical background of agricultural structure in Turkey we have to first come to terms with the discussion on how to define the macro social structure that has existed in Anatolian geography before the modern ages. Ercan (1993) warns us against the widely held convention within the Turkish history writing about the uniqueness of the social structure in the Ottoman Empire. He describes this paradigm as primarily resting on the assumption that the social formation in Ottoman Empire had differed essentially from the one in Europe because of the tradition of a strong state. According to this argument, unlike the European feudalism which rested on a fragmented authority shared among the feudal landlords' autonomous rights and duties over their respective lands, the highly organized state which effectively monopolized the military and governing power over the distribution of rights and duties characterized a distinct form of social organization.

This position is also supported by a theoretical foundation developed around the discussions of an *Asian Mode of Production*. Similar to the emphasis on the determining role attributed to an over-arching state structure in the strong state tradition argument, this position also suggests that no independent class-like positions can develop within the social organization because the centralizing tendencies of state are so powerful that it reaches out and controls the totality of agricultural production. İnan (1983) conceptualizes the near perfect ability to control the social formation as a legislative body geared to guarantee the independent existence of free peasantry over the state owned lands, as the continual existence of the centralized power depended on the dispersion of any potential basis of power at the local level.

Keyder also believes that the Ottoman history should be studied through its particularities and the concepts used in explaining the feudal social structure are not relevant in examining the historical conditions of production which

constituted the basis of that society. In an article examining the trends strengthening the petty commodity ownership in Turkey (1983) he attributes the causal mechanisms which kept a system based on independent and autonomous peasant communities overseen by a distant, vast and authoritative state to the availability of arable lands at all times and the relative low fertility of the soil. He claims that labour/land ratio was so low that the new coming tribes or peasants moving from their previous settlements independently or as complete villages could always find new lands to cultivate and start new settlement.

The possibility of relocation gave the peasants a base of independence and together with the low yields that the land produced at even the greatest of environmental conditions in the present level of technology which resulted in the disability to accumulate a separate basis of wealth, resulted in state's strong control over the social system as the sole appropriator of the surplus through the undisputed land owning rights. According to this point of view, the existence of a state structure as the only body with a significant claim of rights over land ownership has also prohibited any class-like positions from developing within the society which could have been an engine for the dissolution of the peasantry.

This emphasis on the particularity of the Ottoman history is basically garnered to assert the irrelevance of the theoretical discussions on the transition to capitalism as the social conditions of feudalism had never existed in the context of Turkey. But Ercan (1993) refutes this position on a theoretical level. While claiming that the social organization that existed in Europe and Ottoman territories should be considered on common terms and studied with concepts that are relevant for both, he drives relevant points from the studies of both B. Boran and M. Kıray. He points out that Boran emphasised that in both cases the basis of the system was the peasantry and the rent derived from the land while Kıray has claimed that while there have been divergences between the European and Ottoman Empire the principle of keeping labour on the land and controlling the surplus lied in the foundation of both.

This argument is better clarified by Berktay (1983) when he is criticising the widespread conceptualization of feudality in Turkey. The main criticism he develops against the studies that propose that we should employ a different conceptual set in studying Ottoman society is that their understanding of feudality is wrongly based on the idea of decentralism. He claims that the assumption of a strong and centralizing state mechanism in Ottoman Empire can not justify its definition as a different social organization because according to him what gives a social organization its basic characteristic is the essential relations that are reflected in the totality of the society and in both cases it is the existence of small peasantry as the predominant form of organization of production.

Berktay brings about another point that is put forward as a proof that Ottoman society should not be considered as a feudal society in the same study. This argument concerns the different form of organization of labour in the appropriation of agricultural surplus as in European social organization the wealth was accumulated through the employment of forced labour on the lands of aristocracy whereas in the Ottoman Empire the cultivators held the rights over their respective livelihoods and were not usually forced to work as a duty (except for the sharecropping arrangements where working on the soil under the control of a larger landowner who also provided some of the means of production which could be argued to be different because it also provided some benefits for the cultivator too).

Berktay argues that this issue is related with the differing appearances that the surplus appropriation, namely the rent taking, could take under feudalism. The forms of rents in labour (which formed the basis of wealth from cultivation of manor lands), rents in kind (which were collected in the system of *timar* which was the governing principle according to which the lands have been distributed in Ottoman Empire) and rents in money (which had become more and more common both in Europe and Ottoman territories with the increasing determining power of world markets and provided a resurging power basis for the central authorities) are all variants of a system which depends on the exploitation of the

small peasantry bound to land by a social class of aristocracy which controls them.

As it can be discerned from the presentation of the arguments above, the predominant form of organization in the Ottoman agriculture as the basis of the social structure was based on system where nearly all land was considered as being owned by the state (it was officially considered to belong to the *Sultan* on behalf of God). This land is operated on according to the system of *timar* in which the duty of controlling cultivation and collecting the rent is given to *sipahis*, 'lords' of military might who are expected to be of highest loyalty to the state and ideally are not given possession over their office or rights on the lands but are kept in place as long as they proved useful and serving.

But the extent of the control that the state had over these representatives varied over time. The manner in which pre-modern form of sovereignty built itself, distribution of governing offices in a system of rights and duties have strengthened the disintegrating tendencies embedded within as the empire has grown larger. *Ayans*, the regional overlords had started building up separate bases of wealth through large lands they held and numerous villages they have subjugated under their own control. Tezel (1972) argues that in the middle of 18th Century the autonomous authority of these lords have reached to such a point that the central authority did not have any power in the Anatolian lands whatsoever. *Sened-i Ittifak* (Treaty of Alliance) which was signed at 1808 provided a legal basis for the autonomy of regional lords and should be seen as a proof of acceptance by the central state authority of its incapacity to rule over all its lands directly.

The establishment of a strong basis of great landlords becomes significant for the establishment of dependent relationships that has a definitive character for the small peasantry. This period also coincides with the transformation of the international trade on some of the agricultural goods into a true world market where the goods achieved increasing commodity prices as the needs of industrial

centres grew. According to Yerasimos (2001), this change and the increasing integration of Ottoman agricultural production to the world market have set out a trend that would enable the state to regain its power basis against the autonomous regional landlords, as the spreading commodity nature of the products provided a possibility for a general monetary form of tax that could be directly issued, controlled and collected by the state.

Yerasimos also evaluates the land law of 1858 which enabled the private ownership on land, within this context. He states that we should consider this law as a part of the state's attempts to cut the power basis of regional authorities and obtain a source for getting directly in relation with the small peasant producers. The aim was to lighten the dependency the petty agricultural producers had towards the larger landowners by reregistering the property rights over the lands they operated to the peasants so that the state would become the only actor to extract the greatest amount of surplus possible. But Yerasimos claims that the results of this law has been the opposite as the peasant holders refrained from registering in order to avoid an extra tax burden and the large land holders on the local scale consolidated their power over villages as they claimed ownership or simply bought the available lands (the discussion on the land law could be found in Yerasimos, 2001: 104 – 118).

The establishment of large land owning structure on the local level is also related with the implementation of taxes. State saw taxes as a means of amassing extra resources from the increasing commoditization in the 19th Century, which helped the central bureaucracy to wrangle the authority back from *ayans*. But in order to comply with the necessity of paying taxes which acted as money rent, peasants were submitted to the requirement of raising money. This requirement has brought about the downgraded conditions of existence that the widespread petty agricultural producers were in when the Republic was established. Together with the increasing commoditization, the production for exportation has also determined the circumstances that shaped the formation of agricultural organization till the beginning of the 20th Century. As the Ottoman Empire has

succumbed in a crisis of foreign debt in order to finance the expansive and loosing wars it waged with better organized European rivals, it has given up the control of its trade and the regulation of rural organization has become more influenced by the needs of the global market as the European countries have become a part of organizing the agricultural production along their needs.

Among the variances that we will face when dealing with the agricultural structure in the Turkish Republic, we can trace the formation of many of them in the influence of the integration to the world market in late 19th and early 20th Centuries. We can boldly identify a couple of general forms before continuing to deal with them under the discussion on the republican period. First of all we need to note down the introduction of the influence of the as capitalist farming in the more fertile areas of Western and Southern deltas where the foreign capital holders invested, building railroads, better transportation and substructure. The second trend could be identified as the most common feature as the small scale peasant holding had already started to be submitted under a debt cycle and a system of sharecropping under the control of larger land owners. Finally, we can perhaps claim that the effects of monetarization and integration with the world market had been most devastating in the Eastern and South-eastern Anatolia as the families who had little to no land could not even manage their independent reproduction and were subsumed under a form of bound labour called as *yarıcılık*, living and working on the lands of a large landlord controlling numerous villages and also holding political and religious power as the head of tribal collective, *asiret* and a representative of the cult as the *sheik*.

Now let us deal with how these forms have evolved under the republican era during different periods where changing inclinations and strategies of the ruling class have shaped the predominant schemas of state policy.

3. 2. Background of Contemporary Situation

3. 2. 1. State Policies throughout Republican Period

The young state that have been established after the downfall of the Ottoman Empire following its incompetence in governing the Anatolian lands after the outcome of the First World War, was inherited by a cadre of ambitious military bureaucrats who struggled to determine the course of capitalist organization in the country. Yüzüak (2005: 45-47) claims that the route determined for the establishment of the foundations for this capitalist organization was to be achieved through industrialization. Günaydın (2002: 9-10) also acknowledges the importance of and commends on the appropriateness of the preference for industrialization in the initial years of the republic, but he notes the emphasis placed on the agricultural production to be crucial as well. He claims that the ‘development’ in these early years was ‘achieved’ through the dependence on agricultural productivity.

Oral (2006: 17-18) however argues that the policies of the new state in these early years were directed towards supporting the big landownership. He argues that the big land owners were practically supported by the opening up of new lands for agricultural production in their favour, the selling of the lands appropriated from the deported minorities and the credit systems introduced which required large amount of land as a guarantee for the grants. In addition to this class preference, Ecevit (1999: 12-14) also argues that the state policies of the era were decidedly in favour of private sector as it undertook major investments and subsidiary costs in order to provide the infrastructure and cheap inputs necessary for a ‘take off’ of the private capital accumulation process.

Boratav (2003) argues that we can divide the early years of the republican economic policy in to three sub periods: the rebuilding period under the conditions of an open economy between 1923 and 1929; the protectionist and

statist industrialization between 1930 and 1939 and finally, the Second World War period between 1940 and 1945. He claims that the initial period was characterised by the inability of the state to control and institute protectionist policies because of the prohibiting clauses of the Lausanne Treaty which expired in 1930. The protectionist and developmentalist policies which would be later advised by the dependency school that were initiated in the second period were disturbed by the global economic crisis and destruction that came with the Second World War. Whatever the differences in these sub periods in the initial years, it is clear that the period following the establishment of Bretton-Woods system and Turkey's integration with the western bloc in the second half of the century have transformed the political economic structure of the organization of capitalist accumulation in Turkey.

Günaydın (2002: 1-14) strongly stresses the integration with the newly institutionalized international structure and its monetary system as a departure from the previous era of republican policies which were more in favour of the "national interests". The entry of Turkey into OECD, IMF and World Bank in 1947 and becoming a member of Northern Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1952 cemented Turkey's integration with the new world order that was being organized around the interests of the rising imperialist power of United States which enormously built its economic power during the World War period. Ecevit (1999: 16-17) on the other hand turns our attention towards the affects of the *Marshall Plan* in transforming the structure of agricultural production in Turkey during the new dynamics of integration with the international capitalist organization following the Second World War. The spread of so called "green revolution" to the later capitalizing countries that held close ties with the western powers have meant large credits issued for the mechanization of the agricultural production in Turkey.

The productivity in agricultural production and the contribution of the agricultural exports to the domestic product have risen considerably following the 1950, and together with the reissued planned economic initiatives taken out by the state

through heavy mechanisms of import substitution have produced a growing economy in Turkey during the 1960s. But as this growth was in part dependent upon the foreign credits and the industrialization initiatives did not produce a level capable of producing capital goods; and together with the lower level quality of the durable goods produced in a forced market brought about a higher dependence on the importation of technology from outside, the system soon produced strong tendencies towards a crisis at the end of 1960s.

3. 2. 2. The Neo-liberal Reorganization

When the world economy entered a period of general crisis following the 1972 collapse of the markets depending on the oil prices, the exacerbating effects of this development on the Turkish economy have revealed that the planned economy would not be able to sustain itself on a sustained course without revisions including loosening up the protectionist policies. But according to Günaydın (2002: 13-14), the short-lived governments did not want to take responsibility for the necessitated reforms which would halt the gains that the working populations had, so they kept postponing the devastating effects of the crisis with short term policies, boosted by the workers remittances that were sent over from the immigrants who went to Europe. At the end of the debate, the crisis reached to a point that it was not able to be governed anymore by these policies, the economy had mostly collapsed, the basic needs could not be provided for the population and there were widespread political strife among the people divided along radical ideological lines. The bourgeoisie had to mount a wholesale intervention that would enforce a wholesale restructuring of the basis of political economy in order to establish the necessities of a system that would better be able to integrate with the new dynamics of capital accumulation increasingly becoming organized on a trans-national basis.

The newly devised route for a restructuring was outlined in the economic program which was prepared by Turgut Özal and declared at 24 January 1980. This restructuring basically proposed a neo-liberal regime where the economic

structure is centred on export-oriented production; the international trade is deregulated, the state intervention in economy is minimized and the state-led large economic organizations with the responsibility of providing low-cost goods and services to people as well as other capitalist organizations were privatized. Günaydın (2002: 15) points out that the implementation of this policies along with diminishing the grounds of collective bargaining for the workers so that the work force costs could be reduced as a source of comparative advantage in the liberal integration with the world markets, necessitated a brutal and widespread use of force, which was achieved by the military intervention in 11 October 1980.

Emre (2003) also notes down the devastating affects that the neo-liberal policies and the “structural adjustment programs” advised by the IMF and were employed in parallel with this regime had on the agricultural sector. She claims that up until the recent structural adjustment programs that were developed following the 2001 economic crisis, the agricultural sector is singled out as a main source of economic failure and this propaganda is used in order to justify cutting down the subsidies used in supporting the agricultural producers. Kasnakoğlu (1992) also takes up the issue of declining subsidies in agricultural production and compares the levels of subsidies employed in OECD countries. He finds out that throughout the 1980s, the levels of agricultural subsidies are far lower than other countries in the OECD and when compared to the levels of total subsidies issued in the year 1979, the amount subsidies issued in the years that followed have always remained in negatives.

Yenal (2001) on the other hand treats the transformation of how the state used to govern the agricultural production by setting base prices and being a wholesale buyer of many of the crops and abandonment of these practices as a part of the process of internationalization of food and agricultural markets and how the neo-liberal restructuring of the state necessitated the shrinking of state’s regulatory power in this area and opening up the field for trans-national investments. He also notes that the number of the types of crops that were subsidised have also fallen down drastically as it was 22 in the year 1980 while only 10 were left in 1990, of

which some are promised to be removed in the stand-by treaties signed with the IMF. Günaydın (2003) warns us that the situation could get worse as the GATT process that the World Bank is trying to initiate that Turkey is also a partner promises a wholesale liberalization of the trade in agricultural goods and removal of all the subsidies and protections geared towards ensuring the production of certain goods.

Overall, the trade-liberalization and removal of state support for the agricultural producers as well as its intervention in the agricultural goods markets as a regulator has been in full swing since the 1980s in Turkey. These developments allow for a major transformation of the organization of agricultural production in Turkey more in favour of the trans-national capital. We are now going to examine an example of this process which may become a more dominant trend in the coming years within the structure of Turkish agriculture.

CHAPTER 4

CONTRACTUAL TOBACCO PRODUCTION IN *DÜZCE*

4. 1. Problematizing “Peasant Question” on a Case Study

As this study aims to bring the class nature of petty-agricultural producers into question and discusses the relevancy of the conceptual tools that have been used in order to analyze this social category, it could be considered helpful if a field study is taken so that some form of contemporary data can be provided in illustrating some of the points that are discussed and provide examples for the arguments presented. Because of the time constraints of a master thesis study which aims to conduct an original field research and also the financial restraints brought about by not relying on the data provided by a research carried out on another project, funded by wider, institutional resources; the research is limited to a fairly small sample trying to pinpoint an exact case in which we could be able to discuss different positions that could potentially be found within the context of family-owned small scale agricultural production units. Rather than trying to gather data which comprehensively represents the conditions of existence of the wider phenomenon of petty agricultural producers throughout Turkey, I tried to choose a case in which we could find various examples illustrative of the various realities associated with this form of organization of production and overall trends of transformation of petty agricultural producers within contemporary restructuration of agricultural production.

The theoretical issues discussed have brought forth several aspects to consider on the issue of examining the defining characteristics of an agricultural unit of

production in which the means of production, foremost among them being the land operated on, belong to the family and the unit employs the unpaid family labour for the up-keeping of the land and operating of the production. It is argued that this unit can not constantly improve the conditions of production as it could only amass a return from its activity of production that is barely enough to ensure the reproduction of the unit and can not, most of the time, accumulate capital. This assumption brings in the question of the extent of 'capitalist' nature of this form of organization; the compatibility of its logic of operation with the general rules of capital accumulation and the manners in which this form of operation is related with the overall structure of the regime of capitalist accumulation.

Another important point brought forward in the theoretical discussions is the reorganization of the food and agricultural regimes and the increasing determining power that the Trans-National Companies (TNCs) develop in shaping the organization of agriculture. Considering the contemporary literature on the centrality of the global restructuring process and TNCs as powerful actors within this process; the need for developing the tools appropriate to analyze the transformative effect of this new dynamic, if there is any, becomes necessary. When we consider this development in regards to the formative basis of our inquiry, the question of class basis of the petty agricultural producers, it would be more beneficial for us to concentrate on investigating an example of the newly introduced forms of relation and determination that the trans-nationalization process have brought about while striving to elaborate on the issue of understanding the social position of the form of organization of production that we are interested in.

Besides the assumption that the dynamics brought about by the trans-national reorganization of the food regimes will gain increasing importance in shaping the overall structure of agricultural production, the current debate on the establishment of a new food regime organized on trans-national basis and the different extents of the relation that the TNCs develop with petty-agricultural producers in the later capitalised countries can also be found to be shedding a new

light on our principal question of class structure of the petty-agricultural producers. I will argue that the ease of the connection formed between global scale giant companies and small scale family producers brings the emphases on the non-capitalist qualities and/or nature of 'peasant' production into question. In addition to this, the arguments presented in the formation of a new Trans-National Food Regime and the realignment of the roles of many actors in the field lead us to reconsider the development and dependency discussions of 60s and 70s that we referenced when dealing with the rural societies and trying to explain their existence and relationship with the overall structure of the social organization.

Therefore an investigation through a conceptual tool introduced by these new forms of relationships between highly organized and centralized capital of trans-national nature and the small scale family owned production units in agricultural structures of later-capitalized countries which we are trying to analyze and understand should be giving valuable insights on both accounts of understanding the processes brought about by the trans-nationalization process and bringing a new dimension to the discussions on the issue of class position of petty-agricultural producers. As an example of these tools I have picked up the relation of contractual farming established between TNCs and petty-agricultural producers in which the TNC has a greater control over the production process while providing the seeds to be cultivated and overseeing and being in command of every step of production process through the deployment of its experts.

This specific form of contractual farming extends beyond the traditional guaranteed purchase and lets the organized capital organize the production process and have a totality of control over it according to its production and commercial needs without investing in the agricultural process itself, by becoming a direct producer. It has been thoroughly discussed in the literature on the establishment of trans-national food regimes that contractual farming is among the preferred strategy of TNCs which deal with food processing or agricultural products retailing. As the contract farming could be expected to

become more and more common in the future within the agricultural structure of Turkey considering the benefits it provides for the organized capital dealing in the agricultural industry and goods sectors and that the TNCs are increasing their activities in Turkey, I think that handling the contract farming as a research question is more than justified in a study dealing with Turkish agriculture.

In order to operationalize these issues, the field study is aimed at encompassing a community of petty agricultural producers who are engaged in a contractual relationship with a trans-national company. Investigating a sample involved in the cultivation of a cash-crop is also preferred as this would enable the producers to reflect the full potential of possible ambitions that could appear for small land owning enterprises as different households at various degrees of capitalization and commanding different levels of wealth and resources are expected to be encountered and interviewed. Moreover, as the histories of the production units and the processes that went into decision making at different stages of production organization will be questioned; we can be able to distinguish the structural processes that determine the particular type of existence of this production unit; discussing whether this form of production organization has any significant differences governing its operation distinguishing it from those that govern the small scale, family owned enterprise in any other field; originating from the particularities of the “rural” context or the supposed non-capitalistic characteristics of ‘peasantry’.

Another point of observation is that the contractual relationships and the crop produced under contractual arrangement would have brought about a higher income for the family as they are willing participants of a more strictly organized work. This could provide a basis for observations on how the petty-agricultural producers make the transition from being production units more close to retaining themselves on a subsistence level to family owned enterprises with a larger income, having the ability to hire wage labour on non-permanent basis, as an important component of the production process. I estimate that trying to uncover periods in which the levels of wealth of the household changed and how this

affected the organization of production process within the household (i.e. employment of different forms of labour, credit seeking in order to improve the means of production, changing importance of labour exchange with the other households within the community, etc). A rising tendency to use wage labour should provide my thesis with strong arguments in terms of demonstrating how the petty-agricultural producers adopt to changing conditions of the market and how the rising monetary gains change their forms of operation as against the assumption of conformity to a distinct 'peasant logic'.

Another emphasis that the study could place consist of the rise in the number of readily available cheap labour stock in the agricultural sector in the past decade or so as a result of Kurdish immigrants and seasonal migrants who ended up as landless rural labourers resulting from the forced migration process. It could be noted that the use of wage labour on 'seasonal' basis (or on a need basis) have increased enormously in the agricultural sector and the severity of working conditions of the unsecured wage labourers adds up to growing profits of the small-scale family owned agricultural producers. This specific issue, which may be a result of the greater political conjuncture in the country, presents an important proof for the argument that, given enough chance by the changing conditions of circuits of capital accumulation the petty agricultural producers will discard the non-commodity features of their production to improve their chances of capital accumulation; hence strengthening the theoretical proposition that claims the family owned small-scale agricultural production units are organized on a similar basis with petty-bourgeois forms of production; seeking to exploit the labour of others based on their ownership of means of production.

4. 2. Choosing the Case and Familiarizing with the Field

The bulk of the data to be presented in this study will consist of several in-depth interviews with a number of petty-agricultural producers operating under a contractual relationship with a trans-national company. I have decided the field

and the crop that is cultivated by the subjects of this study through several correspondences with the head of Agricultural Engineers Chamber, Gökhan Günaydın, who have informed me on the status of contract farming and the operations of TNCs in Turkey.

After deciding the province and the type of crop I have also corresponded with Association of Tobacco Experts and their representative in *Düzce* in order to learn more about the process of production, the state of activity of the TNCs in this region and how the special brand they have introduced changed the production process.

For an initial research on the region and in order to establish contacts at the local level where I would conduct my research, I have went to the field at the beginning of January 2008 for gathering more data first hand from the local authorities and determine the exact location for the possible interviewees. I had visited City Agricultural Administration and the Agricultural Administration branch in the district of *Çilimli* where one of the two firms employing the contractual production was located. Not surprisingly, this district also hosts one of the highest concentrations of the agricultural producers under the contractual production. After gathering general information about the amount and composition of the agricultural production and conditions of agricultural producers in the region and specially the contractual producers that I intended to interview with in particular, I attempted to meet the representative of the firm employing the contracts in order to gain more precise knowledge on the location and amount of its contractors, but the representative have postponed our meeting and put me off to another time.

After gathering general information, I went to the *Döngelli* village where I learned that contractual farmers were located and met the *muhtar* of the village along with a couple of villagers in the tea house, but I could only have a short conversation telling them about my research, confirming the existence of contractual farmers in the village and their general feelings about their product. In this initial contact, I have had the chance to briefly talk to them on their

experience of starting contractual tobacco production and wrapped up my visit by informing them of my intention to come back for a longer interview, as the contracts for that year was not yet established, so I did not have the chance to build a meaningful and up to date sample.

Later on, I have once again visited the field in March 2008 for an extended stay and more comprehensive research. I have interviewed 12 petty contractual producers in the village of *Döngelli*, as well as the company executive and a couple of chiefs overseeing the production, working for the company. In my visit to the subcontracting company to Japan Tobacco International, *Birtab*'s storage facility the day the seeds were distributed to the contract farmers according to the amounts of production specified in their contracts, I also had the chance to interview a couple of contract farmers coming from further villages such as *Balıca* and *Sinircik*. I have also visited the villages of *Hacıkadırlar* and *Pırpır* which were side by side with *Döngelli*, the main field of research that I have focused on, in order to get a better understanding on the various conditions of existence for similar forms of production organization in the immediate surroundings of my research area.

4. 3. Understanding the General Context of the Field

4. 3. 1. Transformation of Agricultural Structure in *Düzce*

The case that I have chosen consists of tobacco producing contractual farmers in the *Çilimli* district of *Düzce*. As mentioned earlier, the primary field of the research have been chosen as the village of *Döngelli*, which kept a higher concentration of Virginia brand of tobacco production as the village is just side by side with *Birtab*'s processing plant including its barns and ovens. The district of *Çilimli* is next to the *Düzce* city centre and is a fairly developed district with a large district centre and presence of local branches of every major state office. Although the centre of the district is approximately half an hour bus ride from the

main road and harder to reach, the village of *Döngelli* is conveniently situated on the main road that connects the city centre with its eastern districts and rolls further into the province of *Sakarya*, the village that lays west of *Düzce*.

This four line road with a fast traffic also contains the only connection of the west side of the province to the inter-city highway (E80) which connects *Ankara Bolu*, *Sakarya*, *Kocaeli* and *İstanbul* so the road that passes through *Döngelli* is pretty busy and connects the village completely with the outside world, in so far as we could consider it an urban suburb with concrete streets within the village, houses with a couple storeys and rubbish collectors owned by the local municipality on the street corners. Despite the higher number of contractual Virginia brand tobacco producers found in *Döngelli* compared with other villages in the district which contain only several households engaged in this specific production activity, the contractual tobacco production does not seem to provide the main determining characteristic of the village. Together with the high number of people who are employed in the wage work outside of the village, it is even arguable that even agricultural production as a whole could be considered as only a part of the village life and not a central activity.

The *Düzce Valley* as well as the plains in the North, at the coast of Black Sea have traditionally been dominated by the production of Oriental type of tobacco together with animal breeding and vegetable cultivation directed towards the large, urban close by markets of *Kocaeli* and *İstanbul*. As we will discuss more comprehensively below, the introduction and heavy promotion of Virginia brand tobacco by the agents of two Trans-National Corporations and the subsequent close down of the local branch of TEKEL have replaced the Oriental tobacco production organization for many of the petty agricultural producers in the area with a relation of contractual production during the 1990s, in which the production process and the results were increasingly determined by the contracting company itself.

Again, resulting from the processes that we will discuss in more detail under the next sub-section, issuing of Virginia brand contractual production has drastically diminished during the last 5-6 years and now the predominant form of agricultural production within the area have turned to become corn feed, sugar beet and nuts as they have gained a price advantage together with various forms of subsidies issued for different kinds of *sera* vegetable and animal feed production, acting as incentives for transformation. The animal breeding also have lost its significance in the province as the amount of meat obtained from the mixed or domestic kinds that are common could not satisfy the rising costs of stock keeping and feed.

However, despite the declining amount of tobacco production in the area, it has not lost its significance as a major source of agricultural economic value according to the Agricultural Master Plan for the Province of Düzce, prepared in 2002 by the Village and Agriculture Ministry and the City Agricultural Administration. When examining the data provided in this report, even though the amount of tobacco produced in the province seem very small when compared to the amounts produced of other, leading crops (of all the agricultural lands, the amount used for tobacco cultivation consisted of only 4,6%, whereas corn feed was cultivated on the 43% of these lands; as for the weight of the total end products, tobacco consisted of 2,3% against 17% of the sugar beet and 44% of the corn feed); we can still see that tobacco was still the premier in terms of the price it gained in the market (tobacco accounted for the 42,6% of the income generated from all agricultural cultivation⁹, whereas corn feed accounted for a 29,4% and sugar beet only for a mere 2,8%) for the year of 2000.

Still the main process that has transformed the rural context in the province of *Düzce* has come from a development outside of the trends that shape agricultural production. Following the earthquake that has devastated the area in 1999, the

⁹ The amount of nut production or the income generated by it is not included in the calculated within these percentages as it was not considered as a form of agricultural cultivation, but under a separate heading like animal breeding or *fundalık*. The income generated from nut production far exceeded that is generated from tobacco production for the year in question; more than ten times according to the values provided in the *master plan*.

province have been declared an area of disaster and a 'province privileged in development'; which meant that the investments in industrial production in the area were offered many fold incentives as tax exemption and lower charges for costs such as electricity and waste dispossession. Together with the central position of the province between two greatest metropolitan centres in Turkey and the ease of its access to transportation substructure and the relatively low costs for labour force, the province have attracted a plethora of industrial investments, which created large amounts of employment opportunities for the former segment within the petty agricultural producers who barely managed their survival and were subject to poverty as well as rising the value of the lands owned within this province, especially those which are close to main roads, as well as presenting a rising demand for housing in the provincial areas accessible through these roads by attracting labour force immigration.

Together with the retro-immigration by the urban habitants who have lost their housing in the city or district centres or were afraid of the risks of living in such an environment presented in case of another possible earth quake towards the rural areas, settling down in villages but keeping their jobs in the non-agricultural sectors as wage earners, the rural areas of *Düzce* have turned into forming a peculiar image, one which holds a mix of semi-wealthy agricultural producers who earns have retained agricultural production as they can earn a considerable income form it, with industrial or urban wage workers living in rural areas, either only as recently moved in settlers or former petty agricultural producers converted to workers among whom are some who continue to maintain agricultural production activity either on a subsistence level or as an additional economic activity.

Two sets of data provided in the *master plan* of Village and Agricultural Ministry and *Düzce* Agricultural Administration illustrate this peculiarity found in the province. The first is the distribution of the percentages of the population currently employed. According to this set of data (pg. 42), the rate of the people employed in agricultural production in *Düzce* is 21% which is quite lower than

the average percentage for Turkey, let alone a province that has been traditionally an agricultural production centre; whereas percentage employed in industrial work including chemical industries, machine production, textile industry and the like is 22%. The employment in the sectors needed for the circulation of capital which could be made up of subtitles such as retailing and trade, transportation and 'services' accounts for another 23,3% while 27,7% of the working population is accounted as "other". This distribution would not be so surprising for an industrial centre but *Düzce* was not even an official province of itself a decade ago, only a district of Bolu with a basis of small scale workshops famous for their wood work and crafts-ship. The rapid increase in the percentages of industrial employment is staggering.

The second data is on the number of people living in rural areas according to their employment distribution. In this table (pg. 21), the first column is reserved for the number of people who live in rural areas, but do not engage in agricultural production, which is only a couple of thousand people short of 45 thousand people. The shocking number presented is the number of people who engage in agricultural production, which is marked at 37 thousand people, along with another 13 and a half thousand engaging in animal herding. There is even a column for those people who live in rural areas and engage in non-agricultural activities in these areas who apparently consist of another 6 thousand people. Even though a further 33 thousand people are marked as engaging in both agriculture and animal herding, the rate of people who live in rural areas but not engage in agricultural activity to those of agricultural producers is surprising indeed.

Even though this distribution is quite unusual for the Turkish context, perhaps it also points out to a trend where the transformation of agricultural production proceeds to a full integration of a small amount of petty agricultural producers with the Trans-National Corporations, forcing the remaining number of family owned agricultural production units which are unable to sustain such a relationship out of the field of agricultural production, who will seek employment

elsewhere without abandoning their rural habitats. Furthermore, the working people who seek to reduce the costs of their reproduction may also seek a similar return migration to rural contexts, if the improving conditions and possibilities of transportation permit. With the increasing flexibility of the organization of industrial production, I believe there is a sound possibility that the employment opportunities will be presented in various contexts in peripheral geographies. Whether or not we can claim that increasing capitalization and selective adaptation of the petty agricultural production is a similar possibility, let us now examine the specifics of the contractual tobacco production arrangement as the case of our study in more detail.

4. 3. 2. Contractual Virginia Brand Tobacco Production

These petty producers have been engaged in traditional tobacco production of the brand of oriental tobacco; in relation with the local bureau of TEKEL, the national monopoly over tobacco products and alcoholic drinks. Starting from the year 1985, two new firms have entered the tobacco production in the area with the introduction of the Virginia brand of tobacco. The first of these have been *Birtab*, which operated as the subsidiary of the trans-national tobacco firm of Camel (now owned by Japan Tobacco International) and the second opened under the name of Marlboro (owned by Phillip-Morris). These two companies have determined the area of Düzce valley to be suitable for the cultivation of Virginia brand of tobacco which they use in their products and starting from the second half of the 1980s, they have been increasingly forming contractual relationships with the producers in this area.

As the local office of TEKEL has closed in 1989, the oriental tobacco production has ceased to exist within the area. The accounts of farmers point out that the price offered for the contractual cultivation of Virginia tobacco was extremely high during the initial years so up until 1995, there had been a rising adaptation of the new brand and contractual relationship by most of the producers in the area, even to the point of the manager of the local branch of a national bank in *Düzce*

investing on a capitalist production by renting land and relying on a full wage labour for a couple of years, until the earthquake in 1999. Resulting from this price advantage, contractual Virginia brand tobacco production had become the premium economic activity in *Düzce* district during the second half of 1990s, and nearly all of the households found in the *Çilimli* district have an experience of Virginia brand tobacco production from this period.

Following 1995 and 1996, there has been a stagnation of the relative price paid for Virginia tobacco and the firms started to cut back the amount of contractual production they assigned after 2001, and drastically so in the last 4 years. The company correspondent for *Birtab* proclaims that the reason for this reduction was the high exchange value that the Turkish Lira retained against US Dollar, so that the cost of exporting the Virginia brand tobacco from Zimbabwe had continuously declined for the companies which needed them for the blends in their cigarettes. As the price advantages of nuts and sugar beet rose for a time and the prices of agricultural inputs, especially the fuel oil used in machinery rose repeatedly, agricultural producers have given up contractual tobacco production in this area. Moreover, following the issuing of law number 4733 in January, 2002 which aimed to reorganize the regulations governing the tobacco production; tobacco has been removed from the list of subsidized crops. As the subsidies for other crops such as animal feed and corn rose in different periods, this change in the supporting policies have provided a further incentive for the reduction of Virginia brand contractual tobacco production in the area.

Finally, after dramatic reductions in the amount of tobacco that has been produced in the area by the companies through contracts, one of the companies, the Marlboro subsidiary has ceased its operations in the year 2008 and closed down permanently. The remaining company claims that they are now reduced to a tenth of the amount that they have been purchasing through contractual production before the year 2001, while the few remaining contractual producers are complaining that the contractual Virginia brand tobacco production has lost its price advantage and they may even consider not continuing if the prices offer

does not improve or continue deteriorating. It seems that the local production of Virginia brand of tobacco is rapidly diminishing although the “Second Report of the Special Commission on Tobacco of the 8th 5 Year Development Plan” points out that *Diüzce* has been the largest centre among the very few places located in the Marmara region that Virginia brand of tobacco is produced in Turkey (DPT, 2004: 41).

This reduction in the local production which simultaneously means the decline of overall production of foreign brands of tobacco in Turkey, has taken place despite the rise in the demand for these brands of tobacco as the domestic cigarette market is shifting towards a domination of blended cigarettes which heavily contains foreign brands of tobacco (Güneş & Gülçubuk, 2002). An earlier report issued by the same commission of the ‘8th 5 Year Development Plan’ also mentions that the demand for the Oriental brand of tobacco, which Turkey has been the premier exporter in the world and which has been a major income of foreign currency and the source of profitability for the TEKEL organization, has been diminishing on the world scale, resulting in the rise of the stocks in the hands of TEKEL as it has been required to purchase the totality of the tobacco production as a means of subsidising the tobacco production (DPT, 2000: 12-14). According to the previously mentioned *second report*, the cost of stocking or destroying the excess and inferior quality tobacco which could not be exported or used in local cigarette production has been counted among the reasons for the exclusion of tobacco from the agricultural subsidies and the projects like alternative crops programme (DPT, 2004: 29-31).

The *second report* also points out to the transition that has transpired in Greece, which was among the traditional growers and exporters of the oriental brand of tobacco but the traditional composition of tobacco brands produced changed gradually as the demand and price for the oriental tobacco declined in the world markets and now a considerable amount of Virginia, Burley and other flue-cured, foreign brands of tobacco that are in rising demand for blended cigarettes is grown in and also exported from Greece (*ibid.*: 24). The *first report* of the ‘special

commission on tobacco' of the State Planning Agency recounts that various attempts at adaptation and cultivation of foreign brands of tobacco, especially the Virginia brand had been made, starting from as early as 1938, but they have repeatedly failed as the tobacco grown were infected by illnesses or mutated and degenerated further away from the original brand in just a couple of generations (DPT, 2000: 27-29).

Most recently, an ambitious and large scale attempt was undertaken in *Bucak* district of *Denizli* which was tested earlier by the Village Institutes as suitable for the cultivation of Virginia brand of tobacco. The newly formed Tobacco Leaf Processing Department within TEKEL has adapted a comprehensive plan developed by TEKEL in 1983 which was never put into action, even going so far as investing heavily on constructing large scale barns in order to be able to process the leaves through artificial heat (TEKEL, 2004). Later on, when I was trying to determine the field for my study, I was inclined to study the changes this project have introduced for the petty-agricultural tobacco producers in the area, but personal correspondence with the tobacco expert in the area have told me in the summer of 2007 that the new brands of tobacco introduced in the area have already deteriorated beyond any use, so the project was already abandoned by TEKEL, even though a small private firm named Spierer Tobacco, which was acting as a subsidiary for Phillip-Morris TNC remained in the area, issuing contractual production of Burley brand of flue-cured tobacco in small allotments.

Considering the continuous failures of the attempts at adapting foreign brand tobacco production by TEKEL sponsored petty agricultural producers related with infections and inability to preserve the quality of the brand, the *second report* by the State Planning Department's special commission nevertheless emphasizes the need to boost the adaptation of foreign brand tobaccos to rise the production to the levels of the domestic demand so a level of import subsidy will be achieved and the transition for tobacco producers can be achieved which are no longer subsidized but could not be reached by the limited success of alternative crop programs. The formula that is offered by the *report* is to support the TNCs who

enter the field through contractual production arrangement, and which controls the research conducted in order to develop special seeds and treatment for a successful adaptation of the foreign tobacco brands in local soil, and beholds the copyrights for the seeds and processes developed in the end of this process. The *second report* proposes that tax incentives or subsidies for the costs of processing should be used in order to make the contracting TNCs rise their amount of production (2004: 33-35), a plan which would significantly increase the existence of contractual relationship between TNCs and petty agricultural producers, at least in the field of tobacco production; if seriously integrated within the agricultural planning policy.

The specific example of the contractual production process that I have encountered in the field on the other hand is perfectly compatible with the accounts in the literature as the company provides them with seeds, helps them set the pools in which the seeds are germinated and oversees this process; supervises the plantation period after the vegetation, provides them with chemical fertilizers, nutrients and pesticides, while routinely controlling the whole process through the experts deployed in the field, called as *çavuş* (captains) of each district who are taking regular measurement of the health and condition of seeds, the herbs that grow in the field, the amount of chemical materials such as fertilizers and pesticides applied, the amount of watering and the distribution of it, etc. What is more, at the end of the cultivation period, the company orders the harvesting and breaking times of various producers according to the schedule of the availability of ovens. When the drying process is completed, the lots of tobacco ready to be processed are returned to producers for them to store in ideal conditions.

In the end when the company is buying the lots from the producers, it is only up to the expert employed by the company to determine the quality of the tobacco and thus the level of payment. This process of determining the cost of tobacco is the point where most of the disputes take place as the producers claim the companies have the expert to degrade the tobaccos intentionally and there is no autonomous body to rectify this process. Most of the rejections to the grading are

sent back to the producer to sort the lots again but in the end the resorted lots receive the same grading most of the time.

The extreme conditions of control that the company has over the organization of production are countered by the bargaining tendency of the producers on the other hand. As the ownership over land as a means of production by the petty agricultural producers have been central in my theoretical framework in determining the class positions of this specific organization of production, I have found that retaining the ownership over land gives these production units a bargaining advantage as they remain fairly confident as to their choice of not preferring contractual tobacco production relationship with the company if they are not convinced by the appeal of the prices offered by the company.

They petty agricultural producers engaged in contractual production in the area have been playing the competition between the two companies when the companies were seeking to raise the production of the tobacco they subcontracted. Now they are more and more inclined to change the products they cultivate whenever they are convinced that the subcontracting tobacco production is no longer holding a price advantage. The level of versatility of these producers is so high, that some even claim to consider leaving their lands bare for a year or planting *kavak* trees, which will turn an income at the end of a decade of growth as we will now see when their various qualities will be presented in the next sub heading.

4. 4. Elaborating the Empirical Diversity

The most important characteristic to define the empirical findings concerning the field study should be *diversity*; referring to the diversity in the conditions of reproduction for the households in this rural context. As discussed above, the industrial investments in the area have presented ample opportunities for non-agricultural employment, so a number of small scale family land owners who

could not provide for increased necessities of maintaining a commercial agricultural production, such as the rising costs of fuel for running the tractors and other machinery for pillaging the land, collecting and processing the crops, issuing pesticides or carrying water if necessary, have either altogether abandoned agricultural production, renting out their lands or keeping a practice of small scale cultivation for the subsistence needs of family, providing vegetable needs and animal feed for a cattle or two which are kept for the dairy product, consumed domestically.

Adding to this abandonment of agricultural activity because of the incompetence of continuing a commercially and competitively sound agricultural production and the provision of livelihood through non-agricultural wage work is the high level of income derived by some of the households through the rising value of the lands in this industrially favorable context by renting out their lands to non-agricultural uses. The owners of lands especially aside the main routes have realized great sums of monetary gains by renting out their lands to factories, selling them to industrial investors, or simply transforming their houses to multi-level apartments and renting out the extra houses to workers. This new segment of rent holders have abandoned agricultural productivity altogether but remain to live in the villages, which are now transformed to a semi-suburbs.

Another source of the diversity present in the rural context of the region is the productivity of the lands and their proximity to the great markets of urban centers near-by, which provides for the constant presence of a strong demand for different kinds of agricultural products. This demand traditionally provided an extra opportunity for the agricultural producers who could actualize a considerable amount of cash income through farmers-market trading in the near by city centers or by selling to the vegetable and fruit *hals*, the wholesale providers for the open agricultural product markets in urban areas.

Today, with the adaptation of emergent forms of global agro-food regime, a new figure has entered this area as well. The agents of retailer chains, either of those

who have a great reach in the national or regional context, or the local branches of global chains, have started to arrange the purchase of agricultural goods directly in the field of their production, establishing contracts with the petty agricultural producers by ensuring the purchase of a given amount of product in certain quality standards. These contracts are not structured as thoroughly as the contract farming that we have investigated particularly in the field of Virginia brand of tobacco as they do not supervise or govern the production process, or provide seeds of particular kinds, but they are also a prevalent form of organizing the agricultural production in the area because a purchase guarantee is nearly always preferred by the agricultural producers in the face of the risks of not being able to realize the equivalent or more of the costs they bear during the production. The constant presence of the high demand for other agricultural products provides an opportunity for diversifying the goods that the petty agricultural producers may choose to cultivate.

In addition to such causes that diversify the rural households in the field of study, the amount of Virginia brand tobacco production has reduced drastically in the current years as already discussed. All these factors combine in order to render the possibility of finding a village in the field of study that could be argued to be characterized by the cultivation of a single crop, the Virginia brand of tobacco in this case, in the traditional sense. While the firm's contractual producers are scattered widely among different villages within the region, they constitute a particular group among different forms of households in the village with one of the greatest concentration of these producers in the region, rather than giving the village its determining characteristic.

For the case in point, I have found that there are barely more than 20 households which are currently engaged in contractual Virginia brand production in the *Döngelli* village, a village that is comprised of 115 households, and which currently holds one of the highest concentrations of contractual Virginia brand tobacco producers. The village of *Döngelli* has also been one of the traditional centers of the contractual Virginia brand tobacco production because of its

proximity to the main offices and ovens of the *Birtab* Company which is issuing the contracts. According to the *muhtar* of the village, only about half of the households are currently engaged in commercial agriculture, as the main road connecting to the inter-city highway is passing through the middle of the village, which means both many of the small land owners have become rent owners through selling and renting their lands to the couple of factories surrounding the village and other found wage employment opportunities to compensate for the debts they incurred as the costs of agricultural production and up-keeping rose while the comparative income it brought has fallen.

The majority of the households that are engaged in agricultural production seem to be upper-middle level households, concentrating their income generating activity exclusively to agricultural production. Many of them have plenty of lands at their disposal, owning directly around 7,5 acres¹⁰ (a couple of them owning less than 5 acres, and a few owning 10 and even up to 12,5 acres) and renting varying amounts of lands depending on the considerable size of their workforce or capital at their disposal. The respondents have agreed that there are an abundance of lands available for renting as many of the households have abandoned agricultural activity. Most of the households that engage in agricultural production in *Döngelli* have shifted to corn feed cultivation in the past 3 to 4 years in order to profit from the subsidies for the crop and the comparatively high prize of it, whereas some grow zucchini under contract by *Carrefour*. Several households have planted nut trees attempting to share the high incomes that the product provides, but the quality and heights of the nut trees in the valley lands that *Döngelli* is situated is arguably inferior to those at the higher altitudes of mountainous regions.

The 12 contractual tobacco producers that I have interviewed in *Döngelli* share similar attributes with the overall schema presented above. A predominant character is that they are exclusively engaged with agricultural activity as a source

¹⁰ An acre measures approximately 4 thousand square meters. The local measure given by the respondents were in fact *dönüms* which correspond to a thousand square meters, so I am dividing the numbers of *dönüms* indicated by respondents by four in order to achieve the number of acres of land in question.

of income, in contrast to households relying predominantly on non-agricultural activities as their main source of income who also keep a level of subsistence agricultural production. There have been a couple of exceptions for this exclusivity, as one of the contractual producers also operates a private vehicle service for the school children and another is also the operator of the local tea house in the village.

I have also witnessed a few examples of non-tobacco producing households engaged in agricultural production that contained a member (either brother of the household or one of his sons) employed in non-agricultural wage work; but this member seems to constitute a marginal case in the household economy. The couple of examples of non-agricultural activity of the contract farmers on the other hand seem to be of the nature of parallel enterprises, when we add the case encountered in *Hacıkadirler* village, where a sibling in the contractual tobacco producing household also operates a stationary shop in the *Çilimli* district center. This search for expanding the base of entrepreneurial organizations can be seen as a proof of the tendency of expanding the capitalist basis of the organization through exploiting the opportunities presented by favorable conditions.

The agricultural production in the *Hacıkadirler* village is more varied as there are more households engaged in wheat production and cattle breeding, as well as a couple of fruit producers as well as the corn feed producers similar to *Döngelli*. The couple of contractual Virginia brand tobacco producers I have interviewed in *Hacıkadirler* seem to express similar qualities with the producers in *Döngelli* village, however the *muhtar* in this village who also happened to be a contractual tobacco producer is a particularly wealthy and large scale farmer. He commands nearly 20 acres of land and rents varying amounts of lands according to how much land he is planning to cultivate that year (the least of which would be 5 more acres). He owns three tractors, one of which is more than 30 years old and not of very much use anymore. He also rents out his tractor. He has two permanent, dependent workers living in his household. He seems to be a small landlord of sorts.

The *muhtar* of *Hacıkadırlar* cultivates around 5 acres of contractual Virginia tobacco, which seems to be the upper most limit that the company contracts to a single producer. However, during the middle of 1990s when the Virginia brand tobacco production was more aggressively promoted in the area, he used to cultivate up to 10 acres, which is the largest amount of allotment issued for a small land owning family farmer¹¹. The *muhtar* of *Hacıkadırlar* is also very much favored by the *Birtab* company officials as one of the better producers and he has worked for both companies at the same time in various years, but he is not allowed to cultivate more than 5 acres according to the current policy, citing that the quality of the product reduces as the land cultivated increases, resulting from the fact that the production process requires close supervision.

There were also two other larger farmers in the village of *Döngelli*, one of them having 10 acres and renting another 10 acres (some of them held by his close relatives, obtained through sharing a part of the product), and the other one owning 12,5 acres and renting around another 5 acres. These two also mention that they employ around 5 to 6 daily workers for around 10 days once the time for collecting the leaves comes around. The *muhtar* of *Hacıkadırlar* also employs varying numbers of seasonal workers for sustaining not only the needs of the tobacco production, but also other crops he cultivates such as corn-feed, wheat and greenhouse vegetables. The other households mention occasionally hiring wage laborers for the collecting of tobacco leaves. More commonly, they use the labor of their extended household and they also share labor among different households (“*imece*”).

Balıca and *Sinircik* are located in the southern valleys that are more fertile. *Sinircik* village had trouble in direct access to water sources, but the pipeline

¹¹ As mentioned earlier, the price advantage during the middle of 1990s have also prompted capitalist farming by outside investor of the Virginia brand tobacco. The enterprise was said to command a total exceeding a 30 acres at the time, but the lands were dispersed in different locals in smaller allotments, each of which were over seen by different *çavuşs*, heads of operation working for the capitalist farmer.

projects initiated in the district have significantly solved these problems, but have also left a financial burden on the petty agricultural producers too. The agricultural producers in *Balluca* also have financial difficulties as the local head of credit co-operative have tricked them and stolen money in their names. The petty agricultural producers that I have met in the barns of *Birtab* on the day that the seeds were being distributed have come back to or continued to keep contractual Virginia tobacco production in order to diversify the sources of their income.

They have been heavily engaged in sugar beat production as the sugar cane cooperative of *Adapazari*, operating as a common stock company have aggressively converted them by offering very high prices, but did not deliver its promises as its operations shifted elsewhere and did not buy many of the product in the region. The producers willing to pursue contractual tobacco production exclaimed that if they were asked to produce sugar beat, they will demand contracts similar to those associated with tobacco production, in order to ensure the purchase of their products. One of the respondents from these villages cried out “Let them bring me the seeds, the fertilizers, the pesticides, etc. I can undertake the hard work on the land, as long as they take care of everything else and tell me how to work”.

Finally, the village of *Pırpır* was dubbed as one of the biggest villages in the district of *Çilimli*, so I was anxious to visit there, in the hopes that I can find more contractual tobacco producers. Once I visited *Pırpır*, I have seen that it was fairly large, with long roads and many houses along these roads, but the in roads to fields were missing. I have later found out that *Pırpır* was a peculiar place, which concentrates the non-agricultural wage workers in large numbers. The villagers in the local tea house told me that agricultural activity was nearly abandoned all together as the costs of agricultural production rose and the lands were not fertile enough to keep commercially sound agricultural production. What is more, the area, as it rested at the northern districts, closer to the higher altitudes, became more and more drought as the years passed. Those households that kept an

economic activity within the village took on herd keeping as the village has access to common lands in the higher plains for feeding the cattle herds. They also grow corn-feed in small allotments in order to feed the herds in winter.

Pirpir village is the host for a large community which is formed by the people who have come from Balkans throughout many decades of the republic, and they seem to have carried on an urban culture, as they have established many associations and social activities in the village. There are several means of privately operated transportation carrying workers in and out of this secluded but large village. There were said to be also a couple of contractual tobacco producers in the village (whom I could not find), but allegedly, they rented lands outside of the village for this production, in the southern villages with more suitable farming conditions. The petty agricultural producers have also engaged in the contractual Virginia production in the middle of 1990s in this village to a degree, because the productivity of the land was also getting scarce at the time. Although before the 1990s, the village was also among the whole landscape which engaged in oriental type of tobacco production, which was among the major sources of income throughout the entire region.

In comparing all these cases, we can see that the diversity of the conditions is affected by the natural conditions as well as social differences and opportunities. It is clear that not many of the cases encountered in the field research present clear examples of the capitalist tendencies of the petty agricultural producers, because the opportunity presented by the introduction of a cash crop was not sustained over a significant period of time, in order to enable the tendencies of accumulation to realize. However, the natural progression of contractual relationship provides a strong argument against the positions which emphasize the independence of the organization of production process in a petty agricultural production organization. The interviewed contractual producers have uniformly expressed their preference of the contractual production, as they are guaranteed the purchase of their products. Nearly none of them complained from the proposed infringement of their independence in organizing the production

process¹². They rejected the proposition that the intervention of the company in the production process as troublesome, and couple of them commended that the continual supervision was helpful in determining the well being of the crops and was preferable over independent proposition.

The patterns of diversification should also be discerned in order to understand the significance of the transformation that has taken place in the agricultural production in *Düzce*. It seems that the poorest segments of the petty agricultural producers have abandoned commercial agricultural production all together in favor of wage work. The better-off land owners have profited by the urban-industrial integration to become rent holders. It is the upper middle segment of the petty agricultural producers who have engaged with the circuits of global agricultural production organization, in a profitable relationship which did not last long. If we have chosen another product which rose value in the global markets for a more prolonged periods, such as the nuts of which's production have also been adopted in the region, perhaps we would be able to see a better picture of how the capitalist characteristics such as the wider application of seasonal wage work would become more predominant.

¹² Only the *muhtar* of *Hacıkadırlar* expressed the contractual production to be harder because he had to supervise the production process more personally, in order to insure better quality of the product.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Considering this extensive discussion on the class position of small scale family owned agricultural production unit, the theoretical position that conceptualizes the petty agricultural producers as petty capitalist units, seeking to exploit the spaces and places created by the negligence of direct involvement of the centrally organized capitalist entities in the organization of agricultural production, especially prevalent in the forms that capitalist organization of agricultural production take in later-capitalized countries where traditional forms of land-owning and the extreme values attached to land-ownership because of its centrality as a means of subsistence for large masses where stable opportunities for comfortable levels of reproduction within labour force are absent, present a hindrance for the full commoditization of land; and also the lack of available excess capital ready to invest in more risky areas of agricultural production either to transform the infrastructure used in the field in order to turn it more capital-intensive so that capitalist farming becomes a viable option, or to organize the capitalist production on a large-scale itself.

The argument that the non-commoditized features of the petty agricultural production units fundamentally alter their characteristics compared to other forms of organization of production grows weaker if we consider that once the unit of production enters the market relations in such a way that it starts determining the extent of its actions in accordance with the chances it is able to obtain from these relations; it internalizes the pressures of maximising the profit as a unit. Thus, even though it may seem that the production is not organised in a rational and

effective way, the head of the unit of production is trying to gain the maximum amount of revenues that he is capable of from 'his' possessions and the organisation of production 'he' has under 'his' control.

Among the strongest basis for the argument that the context and circumstances that petty agricultural producers operate within differ from the general capitalist operation is the dilemma that comes out from the fact that the number of petty commodity producing units stay relatively stable despite the fierce pressures of the market economy and the general wealth transferring mechanisms they are subject under; despite our expectation that a greater amount of turn around should have occurred as less competitive units would fall while more innovative ones would thrive, only to be challenged again by eager upstarts as the currents of the market change.

Another point that is arguably lacking in the organization of petty agricultural production is the inability to constantly invest on the means of production as the competitive pressures of the market forces the individual units of production as enterprises to constantly raise their effectiveness. The school of thought differentiating the petty agricultural producers from the rest of capitalist organizations of production emphasizes that the life cycle of this unit of production rarely exhibit investment in the production process, as any increase on the level of their wealth or investment should be considered as the satisfaction of prolonged needs of reproduction or necessary steps to sustain the unit of production as the conditions of production all over have been changing. The investments on expanding the production are also generally held back by a concern over any major risks, the realization of which would mean the inevitable loss of livelihood and subsistence gains that producing unit obtains from the land, which may not be otherwise replaced. Other reasons that hold back possible investments by the petty agricultural unit could be considered as the lack of commoditization on and availability of land and the inability to hold available capital under exploitive relations of unequal exchange.

Even if these particularities could be held as true, I would never the less like to argue that the small peasant also confirms to a perfect capitalist logic in its operations. The capital accumulation can not be frequently observed in the small-scale agricultural producers of the later capitalised countries but this is because of the restrictions of wealth appropriation by mechanisms of unequal exchange in favour of both the industry within the country and in favour of the centres of higher capitalist concentration on a global scale. There seems to be no reason to claim that the non-ability of capital accumulation because of the place within the structure of organization of circuits of capitalist accumulation is the result of structural difference that this form of production organization has that separates it from a capitalist organization.

It has perhaps useful to note down the lacking points of theoretical discussion presented in the thesis at this point. Despite the overall emphasis on the theoretical positions that problematize the bourgeois-like qualities of the petty agricultural forms of production; the particular bodies of thought they are criticising are not presented in all fairness. The analysis developed by the Marxists in the field of rural sociology around the conceptualization of “petty commodity production” have had many relevant points and contributed greatly to the development of the particular understanding about the realities of this form of production organization. We should note down that it was the original breakthrough that this view has established criticising the populist/Chayanovian approaches as being ‘peasantist’, meaning they were romanticising and idealizing the conditions of existence of the petty agricultural units.

Perhaps in our attempt at delineating the contemporary developments in the theoretical approaches from these previous positions which they owe much and originate from, we have lumped together the analysis of those who used the conceptualisation of “petty commodity producers” in order to define the qualities of family owned small scale agricultural production unit within the capitalist relationships they inhabit, but are not fully integrated parts themselves, exhibiting all of the qualities of a capitalist organization with the non-Marxist petty, populist

approaches they criticised. The arguments presented in the thesis can be critically evaluated in a more objective and comprehensive appraisal of the discussions developed by the rich history of Marxian critique that this school present.

Another lacking point of the thesis can be identified as the paucity of exclusive considerations of the role that the State structure plays. The intervention and support can be singled out as the major source of survival of petty agricultural producers in some approaches and the basis of class alliances with this populous category is a very strong determining factor in shaping the political structure of the later capitalized countries. Perhaps a more systematic evaluation and integration of the development theories which are also concentrated around the question of state policies in the final analysis with the problematics of the thesis could have revealed a more through analysis of the role of the state in these discussion, which is now left for an analysis with a more political science orientation.

Despite its weaknesses, it could be argued that the field work that has been presented also provides sufficient amount of data to defend the position that the non-capitalist features of petty commodity production are not essential to the operation of petty agricultural production and result mainly because of the tight space that this form finds itself to exist within. As the circuits of capital change in favour of the petty agricultural producers, we can see that many of the non-commodity features get replaced by more effective operating components. When the family-owned small-scale farms get lucky on stumbling upon a cash-crop in rising demand, obtain an extra-ordinary good harvest or simply the occasional big rises in the agricultural goods' prizes we can see that the petty commodity producing unit does not have any difficulty in adapting more efficient ways of production as the machinery and infrastructure of the production is invested upon and the amount of wage-labour hired rises, even though it may be in seasonal form.

When faced with these favourable conditions, the petty agricultural producers also attempt to extend the scale of production that they control, either in the farming field depending on the availability of the land, or by financing a small-scale business in a near town centre. I think that the systematic inclination towards extending the capacity of the production unit throughout wealthier cycles whereas the studier efforts the household endures in order to keep the possession of the land thorough the economically weaker cycles making the members of the family suffer extreme devalorization and pauperization are indicative of the central characteristic of land ownership within the organization of petty agricultural production, rendering it in the final analysis to be an organization that is foremost defined by its ownership over means of production, rather than characterized by the fact that it might also use its own labour power or the non-commodity qualities of the labour it uses.

This brings us to another weakness in the thesis in that the presentation of a class analysis within the field is absent. Despite the orientation and claims of a Marxist theoretical framework; an explicit discussion of the class structures existing in the field of investigation can not be found. It is also confusing that the seasonal wage labour is analytically central in the determination of the class positions of the petty agricultural producers as the main focus of the thesis, but a treatise of such a category is lacking both empirically or theoretically. This major weakness of the thesis could be compensated through further studies and larger field research based on the theoretical positions laid down in this study.

Returning back to the theoretical discussion on the class position of the petty agricultural producers, if we leave aside the weakness of the explicit discussion on the class analysis of other components within these relation of production we can look at the innovative features of the new arrangement that petty agricultural producers may exploit in order to overcome another obstacle against capitalist production organization present in the particular conditions of their production. We can argue that the points brought about with the analysis of trans-nationalization process and the relationships developed with Trans-National

Corporations renders the problem of inability of investment by the petty agricultural producers obsolete. In the contractual relationship that petty agricultural producers so willingly enter, the centralized form of capital is doing the investment in the means of production and sharing a part of the profit from the production realized in the global markets with the contracted producers who not only provide the land, but also assume the mantle of organizing the labour process according to the needs of the TNCs. The argument that emphasizes 'the great compromise' of the petty agricultural producer of its previously independent control over the work process is rendered weak by the interviews conducted in the field which diminishes the importance of such a basis of independence to a negligible level.

What is more, by retaining the ownership over land, as a means of production, the head of petty agricultural production unit still holds a degree of independence in organizing the production process, even if the company has a nearly full control over the nature of the production process through its control of the seed which alters the production process fundamentally. Besides the flexibility of petty agricultural producer in entering a contract farming relationship with a specific firm over possibly choosing another firm or choosing to grow another crop all together, even to an extent where 'he' might threaten not engaging in agricultural production whatsoever and remain his lands barren as the unit has also widened its reach of possible income generation to sources other than his own agricultural production; the land owning head of petty agricultural production has the control over the actual labourers, whether they are the unpaid workers of his household or increasingly the seasonal wage workers 'he' hires as the need in the process of production rises.

Another important result that is derived from the analysis of the field study is the high levels of differentiation between the households in rural contexts. The observations concerning petty agricultural producers favoured by Trans-National Companies that obtain the chance to pursue contractual production; non-agricultural wage workers residing in rural areas, rent-owners, and the agricultural

wage labourers who might also happen to have lands which they cultivate on a subsistence basis all witness to a level of differentiation within the same rural community which has not garnered specific attention up to now in theoretical analysis of rural relations of production. This trends of differentiation may become more and more significant in understanding the realities of rural organization of production organization as one of the basic premises of the new international food and agriculture regime is the principle of 'flexibility'.

Throughout all this discussion, one constant remains in determining the class position of the petty agricultural producers, in my view. As the capitalist mode of production is structured upon the separation of producers from the means of production, and as class positions within any mode of production relies on one's position with relation to the ownership of means of production; the ownership over land is the ultimate determinant of the class position of petty agricultural producers as a segment of petty capitalists, despite all their particularities and potential poverty they suffer through. Private ownership over means of production and also on land is the basis of capitalist mode of production, despite its status as an abomination of natural state of being and a crime against a possibly human society. At the very gist of the social existence of petty agricultural producers and at the basis of any of the forms that their social movement may take is the position of defending the private ownership over land.

Bearing this in mind, any class alliance between the petty agricultural producers and proletariat whose aim is to abolish the private ownership over means of production and construction of a human society where everybody contributes according to their capabilities and everybody obtains according to their needs; is extremely difficult. Following our treatise of the founding texts of the political proletarian movement, we can envision that the segments within petty agricultural producers who are extremely exploited and pushed to the brink of differentiation by the pressures of the operation of capitalism can be converted to the proletarian struggle as they would see the radical alteration of the social order together with the abolishment of private ownership over means of production as a means of

their salvation from their burdens; but a compromise on the political program of proletariat should never be done in order to achieve winning such a support, because it not only diverts from the actual emancipation of proletariat and establishment of a human social order, but it also keeps the enslavement of the people under petty agricultural production organization, which will unavoidably be subjected under similar exploitative pressures within the middle term.

The claim for the abolishment of all private property, including the ownership over land as a means of production is a fundamental component of the political program of the proletariat in the struggle to build a free and human society. In order to achieve this goal, people should also reconsider how they relate to the nature and the order of things outside of social organization. After all, as Marx has said the ownership over a piece of nature is a concept extremely unnatural as the capitalism itself:

The fact that it is only the title a number of people have to property in the earth that enables them to appropriate a part of society's surplus labour as tribute, and in an ever growing measure as production develops, is concealed by the fact that the capitalized rent, i.e. precisely this capitalized tribute, appears as the price of land, which can be bought and sold just like any other item of trade. (...) In exactly the same way, it appears to the slaveowner who has bought a Negro slave that his property in the Negro is created not by the institution of slavery as such but rather by the purchase and sale of this commodity. But the purchase does not produce the title; it simply transfers it. (...) It was entirely created by relations of production. (...) From the standpoint of a higher socio-economic formation, the private property of particular individuals in earth will appear just as absurd as the private property of one man in other man. Even an entire society, a nation, or all simultaneously existing societies taken together, are not the owners of the earth. They are simply its possessors, its beneficiaries, and have to bequeath it in an improved state to succeeding generations, as *boni parti familias*¹³.

Karl, Marx, *Capital Volume 3*, 1895, pg.911.

¹³ Good family fathers.

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