

LAND STRUGGLE AND BEYOND: LANDLESS RURAL WORKERS'
MOVEMENT OF BRAZIL

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ABSTRACT

LAND STRUGGLE AND BEYOND: LANDLESS RURAL WORKERS' MOVEMENT OF BRAZIL

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This thesis analyses the Landless Rural Workers' Movement of Brazil (MST) by showing its important characteristics, historical development and forms of struggle. The internal structure, activities and policies of the movement are evaluated in consideration of new social movement theory, Mariátegui's approach on land problem and Gramscian approach. The class dynamics of the movement are also underlined in this study. The thesis argues that the MST has increased awareness and strengthened collective action among its members during the process of struggle. Through these common experiences and consciousness, the movement has gained class character and brought the class issue back in the social movements. The MST offers an alternative world in its settlements and maintains its struggle to transform the dominant system.

Keywords: MST, Brazil, land struggle, social movement

ÖZ

TOPRAK MÜCADELESİ VE ÖTESİ: BREZİLYA TOPRAKSIZ KIR İŞÇİLERİ HAREKETİ

Çelikten, Merve

Yüksek Lisans, Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi Bölümü

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Bu tez Brezilya Topraksız Kır İşçileri Hareketi'ni (MST) önemli özellikleri, tarihsel gelişimi ve mücadele biçimlerini göstererek analiz etmektedir. Hareketin iç yapısı, faaliyetleri ve politikaları yeni toplumsal hareketler teorisi, Mariátegui'nin toprak sorunu hakkındaki görüşleri ve Gramsci'nin önemli yaklaşımları göz önünde tutularak değerlendirilmiştir. Bu çalışmada ayrıca hareketin sınıfsal dinamikleri vurgulanmıştır. Tez, MST'nin mücadele sürecinde üyeleri arasında farkındalığı artırdığını ve kolektif eylemleri güçlendirdiğini savunmuştur. Bu ortak deneyimler ve bilinç vasıtasıyla hareket sınıf özelliği kazanmış ve toplumsal hareketlere sınıf meselesini geri getirmiştir. MST kendi yerleşim yerlerinde alternatif bir dünya sunmakta ve egemen sisteme karşı mücadelesine devam etmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: MST, Brezilya, toprak mücadelesi, toplumsal hareket

To My Beloved Family

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CONTAG	National Confederation of Agricultural Workers
CPT	Pastoral Land Commission
ENFF	Florestan Fernandes National School
INCRA	National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform
ITERRA	Technical Institute for Training and Research on Agrarian Reform
MASTER	Landless Farmers' Movement
MST	Brazil's Landless Rural Workers' Movement
NSM	New social movement
PCB	Brazilian Communist Party
PROCERA	Program for Special Credit for Agrarian Reform
PT	Brazil's Workers' Party
ULTAB	Union of Farmers and Agricultural Workers

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The agrarian question is a contentious issue which has risen as a consequence of the capitalist development that creates inequalities and differentiation making the peasants and rural workers subaltern. This process of socio-economic destruction is the most acute especially in developing countries. The global agrarian structures of production and market conditions make relations with the peasants and rural workers constantly problematic; therefore this process provokes land questions giving rise to the resistance. The land struggles have constituted the basis of significant social movements fighting for land and land reform. These movements have occurred in various regions of the world throughout the history.

Brazil's Landless Rural Workers' Movement (*Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra*- MST) emerged as a result of these struggles for land. The accelerated expansion of monocultures and increase in the agro-industry in the 1970s and agricultural restructuring during the military regime paved the way for the emergence of the MST (Fernandes, 2009: 90). Land concentration, the expulsion of the poor people from rural areas and the modernization of agriculture destroyed the Brazilian rural workers and triggered the struggles for land. Hence, the MST was founded in 1984 in order to achieve a fair land reform and establish a more equal society (Friends of the MST Web site). After its foundation, MST has become one of the most organized, dynamic and influential social movement in Latin America along with its policies and political practices.

MST tries to change the existent situation and proceeds step by step towards its targets. It was established as an autonomous social movement that fights for land and agrarian reform. The movement has struggled for the agrarian question, as well as addressed the structural problems of Brazil such as social inequality, gender discrimination and exploitation of urban workers. It has also been fighting

for the issues of education, health, culture, environment, human rights and communication. It tries to build a new society which is egalitarian, humane and ecologically sustainable (Friends of the MST Web site). With its policies and activities, it has a significant place in social resistance against severe social conditions and neoliberal programs of the government. Its ability of well-organized popular protests, its perseverance and successful tactics have kept the land issue on the political agenda in Brazil. It involves class-based struggles and deals with both land issues and the relations of distribution and property. It pursues systemic social change directed towards socialism (Aysu, 2010). The purpose of this thesis is to show the characteristics of the Landless Workers' Movement on the basis of its historical development and its struggle forms. It aims to analyze the MST and its organizational structure in consideration of some theoretical approaches and underline its class dynamics.

The thesis seeks to provide an evaluation of the MST from different theoretical approaches in the first chapter. As the first theoretical approach, new social movement theory appeared in the mid-1960s analyzes social movements through post-material issues such as culture, gender, environment and human rights. New social movements (NSMs) deal with social and cultural matters more than economic and political matters. They focus on cultural realization, social mobilization and quality of living conditions (Crossley, 2002: 149-151). The new social movement theory puts emphasis on the social status of the participants and their social identities keeping them together (Johnston, Laraña, & Gusfield, 1994: 6). NSMs have complex and non-hierarchical structure with loose organizational network. They are issue-centered and locally-based, and struggle in a defensive manner to improve social conditions and living standards (Johnston, Laraña, & Gusfield, 1994: 8). The Landless Workers' Movement has some important characteristics of the new social movements. The MST deals with social and cultural issues, and aims to increase the quality of life. It struggles to raise the awareness about land issue and to influence the authorities to implement an

efficient land reform. In addition to the similar aspects with the new social movements, the MST has some diverging features. The political and economic issues are significant for the movement. It struggles against economic inequalities and political problems of the country. It has a well-organized and developed internal structure. It mobilizes rural workers and different parts of the society, and organizes various effective activities in order to achieve its goals.

The Landless Workers' Movement is also studied through Mariátegui's ideas related to the land issue. He pointed out the background of the agrarian problem and the role of the peasantry in this process. According to him, the peasants have the potential for change and revolutionary action in the agrarian society (Vanden, 1978: 198). Mariátegui highlighted that the peasants could carry out their role in the revolution only with the help of the proletariat. He supported the alliance of workers and peasants for the revolutionary process. The peasant struggles, thus, play a substantial role in this process to transform the society and establish a new order (PCP Document, 1985: 49).

MST is also analyzed by Gramscian approach on the basis of his crucial concepts such as counter-hegemony, integral state, war of position and organic intellectuals. The movement is assumed as a counter-hegemonic political actor that opposes to the hegemonic power and develops alternative policies. As stated in the Gramscian approach, the counter-hegemonic actors seek to construct an alternative world resisting the dominant regime (Karriem, 2009: 316-325). They represent the subaltern groups and strengthen them with their policies and activities. Furthermore, Gramsci underlined the importance of organic intellectuals to develop counter-hegemonic practices and transform the society. They have influential roles in their struggles by promoting alternative strategies, organizing and mobilizing people and raising awareness about related issues (Hoare & Smith, 1971: 3). In addition to these, Gramsci made a distinction between 'war of maneuver' and 'war of position' which are the two methods for

challenging hegemony. While war of maneuver directly aims to achieve the state power, war of position is a process of creating alternative policies to bring crucial social changes in the society. It attempts to start a long-term process of building counter-hegemonic movements (Morton, 2007: 92-97).

It is also very important to underline the class dynamics of MST. The Landless Workers' Movement has a class-based structure in terms of its historical development, production relations, organizational form and activities. An analysis of class as a relationship and a process can emphasize the class-based features of the MST. The movement has relationships with other classes and opposes the capitalist system especially. In accordance with these relationships, the MST fights against the exploitative and subordinate relationships, mobilizes its members and struggles for its aims. The class awareness among its members has been raised through its experiences, hence they have organized themselves in line with the movement's purposes. The MST has gained class dynamics through its struggle against land problem.

The Landless Workers' Movement is evaluated by these theoretical approaches. The analysis reveals the movement's compatible and incompatible points through these different approaches. Each theoretical approach provides vital explanations for the MST's historical development, activities, internal dynamics and organizational structure. In order to achieve clear outcomes, main sources of each theoretical approach as well as relevant subsidiary sources have been analyzed in accordance with the movement's structure and experiences. The crucial points of its historical development process, its strategies and priorities, and its organizational framework have been evaluated through these different approaches.

Structure of the Thesis

The second chapter of the thesis lays out the main tenets of these theoretical approaches and their soundness. The chapter examines the structure of MST as a socio-political movement that pursues land for landless people along with systemic social change in Brazil. The first part of the chapter deals with the new social movement theory. In that sense, the prominent features of the NSMs and its relationship with the MST are evaluated. The next part of the chapter looks into the agrarian problems and peasant struggles from the viewpoint of Mariátegui. Thereafter, the Gramscian approach and its important concepts are examined in the final part of the chapter. It analyzes the hegemony and counter-hegemony concepts, the characteristics of the integral state, role of political parties and intellectuals, and the distinction between war of maneuver and war of position. Lastly, this chapter emphasizes the class dynamics of the MST. The Landless Workers' Movement has a discourse of class aiming to unite all its members coming from different social locations of Brazil.

Chapter three presents the historical roots of the movement so as to comprehend the development of the movement. It maps out the early stages of the agrarian issue and important turning points of MST. The initial attempts in the land struggle and their experience for the emergence of MST are underlined. The chapter also looks into the years of dictatorship and its influence on the landless movement. Then, it analyzes the struggles between 1978 and 1984 together with the conditions that led to the emergence of the MST.

The fourth chapter discusses the evaluation of the Landless Workers' Movement and its relationship with the political system of the country. It analyzes the movement's development with regard to the political stance of different governments and their changing policies about the agrarian issue and the MST. The first part of the chapter looks into the MST and land problem between the

years of 1985 and 1994. Afterwards, it evaluates the Cardoso government and its different positions towards the MST during his two terms. The following part deals with the development of the MST during Lula government. The final part of the chapter tries to analyze the recent developments of the movement and the policies of Dilma Rousseff.

Chapter five focuses on the organizational structure of the movement and its different forms of struggle. It analyzes the land occupations and other forms of struggle with their outcomes. As significant part of the struggle, the sectors of the MST like production and cooperatives, and education are examined. Then, the chapter lays out the encampments and settlements of the movement along with their internal structure.

The concluding chapter tries to make a general analysis about the movement on the basis of the theoretical approaches. It looks into the development of the movement by analyzing the main findings of the thesis. It sums up the whole process through highlighting the key points of the movement's experiences. The chapter also asks if the framework developed in this thesis could be an example for other social movements that have similar socio-economic and political structures, and raises questions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE TO THE LANDLESS WORKERS' MOVEMENT

The Landless Workers' Movement is one of the most important social movements in Latin America. It shows unique characteristics in its policies and has crucial effects in Brazilian politics. MST's struggles for land and land reform are opposed to the neoliberal policies and their consequences. It strives for a new society through its alternative policies, while it organizes landless people and carries out mass struggles to achieve its goals. The movement promotes collective action and participation among its members. With its non-hierarchical and democratic structure, the movement has had significant effects in Brazil's political and civil society. Therefore, in order to comprehend the movement and its structure, a theoretical analysis plays an essential role.

This chapter aims to build a theoretical approach to the MST by following these steps. The first section lays out the general framework of the new social movement theory and MST's analysis from this point of view as is commonly seen in the literature. It questions whether MST is a typical social movement that can be examined in the new social movement theory. The next part of the chapter examines the movement in line with Gramsci's notion of the extended/integral state and counter-hegemony, and arguments of Mariátegui about peasants, land struggles and capitalism. Following these theoretical analyses, class dynamics of the Landless Workers' Movement are tried to be emphasized. This chapter thus maps out the main tenets of these theoretical approaches to the MST and their soundness. The framework drawn in this chapter offers an explanation for the structure of MST as a socio-political movement that pursues land for landless people as well as systemic social change in Brazil. MST has not only resisted against the existing system, but it has also tried to develop an alternative world in its settlements and in its policy decisions.

2.1. Theory of New Social Movements

The first theoretical approach to MST is the new social movement theory that began to appear in the mid-1960s with student movements. The new social movements (NSMs) have been assumed different from the old social movements in many respects ranging from their aims to their background and organizational forms (Crossley, 2002: 149-151). The NSMs are the products of the shift to a post-industrial economy focusing mostly on post-material issues such as culture, human rights, race, gender and environment. They deal with social aspects more than economic and political aspects. They mostly emphasize the cultural issues and identity, and concentrate on social mobilization, quality of life and cultural realization (Pichardo, 1997: 412-413). The NSMs do not mainly focus on economic redistribution and relations of production while they do not primarily point to the transformation of economic situations and relations as their primary principles (Touraine, 2007: 155). Their struggles stay outside the realm of production, and so they are different from their old counterparts. They represent the interests of excluded groups in society by focusing on identity, culture and the role of civic sphere. Moreover, they defend freedom and responsibility of individuals, and they are against the established order (Touraine, 2007: 155).

The new social movements theory is not grounded on the theoretical basis of old or working-class social movements. “The ideological characteristics of NSMs stand in sharp contrast to the working-class movement and to the Marxist conception of ideology as a unifying and totalizing element for collective action.” (Johnston, Laraña, & Gusfield, 1994: 6-7). The NSMs are opposed to the old social movements which claimed that the central issues in politics were class conflict and economic transformation (Calhoun, 1993: 385). They do not mobilize or organize activities on class lines. “The new social movements thus challenged the conventional division of politics into left and right and broadened the definition of politics to include issues that had been considered outside the domain of political action.” (Calhoun, 1993: 386). The NSMs emphasize pluralism of

ideas and values thus increasing members' participation in decision-making processes. They point out democratization of everyday life and expansion of civil society (Johnston, Laraña, & Gusfield, 1994: 7). They bear the signs of post-industrial or post-modern society in which political and economic identities have lost their importance (Calhoun, 1993: 400).

The new social movements "seemed to be as much concerned with their own members as with the aims they pursued". The NSMs regard their participants as a way to build self-identity around a cause (Reiter, 2011: 155). The main characteristic of the NSMs is that subject positions have become points of conflict and political mobilization (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001: 159-160). The NSM theory states that the key actors of the NSMs arise from the 'new middle class' which emerged in the post-industrial age and employed in the non-productive sectors of the economy. They also comprise of the elements of the old middle class and peripheral groups which are not engaged in the labor market (Pichardo, 1997: 416-417). "The background of participants finds their most frequent structural roots in rather diffuse social statuses such as youth, gender, sexual orientation, or professions that do not correspond with structural explanations." (Johnston, Laraña, & Gusfield, 1994: 6).

The NSMs have complex structures and loose organizational networks. They are generally locally-based and issue-centered (Olofsson, 1988: 29-30). The new social movements have a segmented, decentralized and non-hierarchical structure through considerable autonomy of local sections (Johnston, Laraña, & Gusfield, 1994: 8). They usually lack the role of differentiation, and are opposed to the involvement of professional movement staff (Calhoun, 1993: 404). As they resist the bureaucratization of society which organizes them in a fluid style, they take decisions collectively on all issues and tend to rotate leadership. They constitute alternative channels for participation among members to be able to respond to their needs (Pichardo, 1997: 416).

The new social movements have anti-institutional tactical orientation which uses new mobilization patterns. They employ radical mobilization tactics of resistance characterized by non-violence and civil disobedience (Johnston, Laraña, & Gusfield, 1994: 8). Through these disruptive tactics, the NSMs mobilize public opinion to gain political leverage (Pichardo, 1997: 415). They generate a public debate to be able to change the consciousness of the participants and to improve social conditions and life standards. Although they do not directly challenge the state and do not aim to seize the power, they seek to “regain power over their own lives by disengaging from the market rationality” (Crossley, 2002: 160; Pichardo, 1997: 421). Therefore, they put emphasis on the autonomy and self-realization struggling in a defensive manner (Calhoun, 1993: 396).

In brief, the new social movements “focus on goals of autonomy, identity, self-realization, and qualitative life chances, rather than divisible material benefits and resources” (Steinmetz, 1994: 178). The NSMs have post-materialistic value base, and aim to provide an alternative cultural and moral order (Buechler, 1995: 448). They do not appeal to class lines but cut across them” (Steinmetz, 1994: 179). They are defined by the dynamics of identity, culture, gender or age. In the new social movements, these social divisions are more influential for collective action and social activism. The new social movements mobilize on the basis of values and goals on which their members agree (Buechler, 1995: 453-456). They generally have non-hierarchical organizational forms and informal networks. Besides they politicize various aspects of everyday life and emphasize socially constructed nature of grievances (Steinmetz, 1994: 179; Buechler, 1995: 442).

Similar to the new social movements, Landless Workers’ Movement also resists the established system and aims to change the consciousness of its members. It deals with the social and cultural issues. It tries to increase the quality of life to a level so that it has the capacity for developing its own education, health and communication system. The movement utilizes disruptive tactics to raise the

awareness concerning the land issue. MST participates in the politics to influence the authorities to implement a comprehensive agrarian reform. It always puts a special emphasis on preserving its autonomy. It refrains from establishing an organic link with political parties and organizations. In all these respects, the movement has the features of new social movements.

Although MST represents some aspects of the new social movements, it also includes other important features diverging from new social movements. Principally, MST is a social movement of rural workers who struggle for their right to the land and land reform, and fight against injustice and inequality in rural areas (Friends of the MST Web site). It follows the goal of self-determination and strives for a more equal society. The land concentration and social and economic inequalities in rural areas lie at the heart of the MST's struggles. The movement grew directly out of the exclusion of the rural workers and their subaltern positions. As a result of these circumstances, even though MST is assumed as a new social movement, it is also seen as a class-based organization in which rural workers and small farmers are drawn together as a social class. Its resistance and opposition to the neoliberal policies have had an undoubted class basis (Veltmeyer, 1997: 153). It touches upon the political and economic issues as well as the social and cultural issues. It has a general political scope, and participates as a socio-political movement in the political life of the country (Harnecker, 2003: 110). It is not a loosely organized movement; on the contrary it has a well-organized and developed internal structure in order to achieve its goals. It deals with the economic issues as well as social and cultural issues, and seeks to transform the society by developing alternative policies (Friends of the MST Web site).

At this point, it is important to underline a typological distinction in new social movement theory made by Steven Buechler. According to Buechler (1995: 456-459), there are "political" and "cultural" versions of new social movement theory

that emphasize different dimensions. The “cultural version of NSM theory” identifies the societal totality in terms of cultural terms. This version focuses on everyday life and civil society, and aims to create free space between state and civil society. It has decentralized image of power between social structure and movement. Besides, it argues that new movements displaced working-class movements along with industrial capitalism. The cultural version regards new movements as defensive and eschews referring new movements as progressive. It analyzes social base of these movements on the basis of non-class terms (Buechler, 1995: 458-459). On the other hand, the “political version of new social movement theory” underlines the capitalist nature of societal totality and connections between macro-level structural features of contemporary capitalism and the emergence of new social movements. It is more macro-oriented and also more state-oriented. The political version recognizes the role of race, gender, nationality, and other characteristics without rejecting the potential for class-based or worker-based movements alongside these other groups. In addition, the political version sees the potential of new movements for progressive change if allied with working-class movements. It regards political movements as most radical, and criticizes the apolitical nature of culturally oriented new social movements. It also analyzes the social base of new social movements in class terms through attempts to theorize the complexity of contemporary class structure and its contradictory locations (Buechler, 1995: 457-458).

With regard to the distinction of Buechler, it is important to analyze the Landless Workers’ Movement on the basis of “political” version of new social movement theory. Thus, the MST can be evaluated from this perspective: the movement raises strategic questions and takes instrumental actions for its ultimate goals. It recognizes both the role of social and cultural values, and the potential for class-based actions. It organizes activities and mobilizes its members for proactive and progressive change. For this purpose, the MST always underlines the appropriate alliances and coalitions with other class-based movements and organizations. It

has political nature and strives for radical changes through its decisions and activities.

2.2. Peasant Struggles and Mariátegui's Approach

The views of José Carlos Mariátegui about land problem and peasantry present another viewpoint in analyzing the Landless Workers' Movement. He was a Peruvian intellectual and a major Marxist-Leninist thinker in Latin American history (Vanden, 1978: 195). According to Mariátegui, feudal or semi-feudal structures of the Latin American countries have survived in their agrarian systems. The *latifundia* system also maintained its influence in the agrarian structures (Mariátegui, 1979: 40). They have been controlled by imperialism and capitalism. On the basis of these conditions, Mariátegui underlined the agrarian problems and analyzed the forces for revolution (PCP Document, 1985: 47-49). He developed a Marxist approach in the light of the rural, agrarian conditions. According to him, the peasantry is the majority and the main force for revolution. The peasants have been exploited by the feudal relations, and have been seen capable of rising up against the forces which oppressed them (Vanden, 1978: 199). In addition to the peasants, the working class is the leading class in the revolutionary process. Mariátegui highlighted that the peasants could fulfill their role in the revolution only with the appearance of the proletariat (PCP Document, 1985: 49). He supported the alliance of workers and peasants and self-determination for the revolutionary process (Vanden, 1978: 203).

Mariátegui put an emphasis on the economic structure as well as the social relations of exploitation. He argued that there have been both economic and social issues under the agrarian problem, and the land tenure relations have been very important in this process (Becker, 2006: 462). He established a link between structural changes in the agrarian society and the peasant uprisings, and so he defended peasant struggles (PCP Document, 1985: 50). According to him, the

mode of production, the unequal distribution of land and the anti-feudal struggle of the peasants formed the basis of the class struggle in the countryside (Vanden, 1976). He called for organizing union of peasants, and underlined the importance of forming peasant leagues and setting forth the organizations capable of mobilization of the peasantry. He also pointed out that peasant movements set the ideological and political positions and forged organic structure (Vanden, 1976: 191-199).

The political education, effective organizational methods and technical assistance were emphasized importantly in the land struggles. He added that the intellectual capacity of the peasants to establish a new order through class struggle as an essential condition (Vanden, 1976). These features of the Mariátegui's approach underline the importance of MST as a peasant-based movement in the process of land struggles and in the aim of transforming the society.

2.3. Counter-Hegemony and Gramsci

A Gramscian analysis offers a broad explanation for the MST and its structure on the basis of the ideas like the counter-hegemony, extended state, civil society and war of position. The Landless Workers' Movement is evaluated as a counter-hegemonic political actor refers to an alternative hegemony in civil society and opposes the hegemonic power. The counter-hegemonic actors consider how to construct an alternative world and how such world is supposed to be. They also accompany political struggles and give meaning to the subaltern classes. According to this approach, MST resists the dominant regime and makes an alternative hegemony. In this regard, it develops alternative forms of production and alternative plans for nature-society relations (Karriem, 2009: 316-325). The Gramscian approach enables to understand the rise of the MST and its tactics, decisions and relations.

The Gramscian analysis underlined the importance of ‘the moment of hegemony’ which points to the class struggle within capitalist development and social function of intellectuals in state and civil society relations (Morton, 2007: 77). Hegemony is considered as a dynamic process which is realized not only in the economic area but also in the social and political areas (Morton, 2007: 93). The struggle over hegemony, according to the Gramscian approach, includes three moments within the relations of force. The relation of social forces, the relation of political forces and the relation of military forces exist in any struggle over hegemony. Within the political relation of hegemony, there are subjective elements beyond economic-corporate level. The relation of political forces involves economic-corporate interests as well as transcended interests (Morton, 2007: 93-95). In this regard, the analysis of hegemony in alternative contexts and the relationship between state and civil society take an important place.

According to Gramsci, the state comprises both political society and civil society as a characteristic of the ‘extended or integral state’; and it is “the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules” (Hoare & Smith, 1971: 244). “An integral concept of the state is central to understand the moment of hegemony involving leadership and the development of active consent through the social relations of state-civil society.” (Morton, 2007: 90). The state is not only system of government, legislative and administrative bodies and legal institutions; rather is a unity of this political society and also civil society. The civil society is a field of hegemonic relations, and gives the subaltern groups a real and substantial image and has a mediating role between these groups and the ruling classes (Thomas, 2009: 143-144). The civil society is the sphere of struggles and interacts with the state. Hegemony in civil society reflects the social basis of the dominant class’s political power and reinforces its attempts in the civil society. It is a strategy of acquiring consent as opposed to the coercion of the state (Thomas, 2009: 159-162). In the Gramscian

approach, it is stated that hegemony can never be absolute and is threatened by oppositional forces and alternative policies, and is always implies counter-hegemony. The civil society is the sphere in which alternative policies and so counter-hegemony are formed. The counter-hegemonic struggle opposes the hegemony as common sense, and makes the subaltern groups more powerful (Karriem, 2009: 317). The subaltern class struggle shows the power of the powerless, and these subaltern classes play crucial role in exposing and contesting material power relations and also try to change the political direction of the dominant groups (Morton, 2007: 171-172). The subaltern groups do not passively accept the existing dominant policies and in that sense they raise the questions of political and historical consciousness. They contest hegemonic practices through different expressions of collective agency including organizational trade unions, workers' cooperatives, peasant associations and social movements (Morton, 2007: 174). The counter-hegemonic actors struggle against the coercive institutions and policies that strengthen the hegemony of dominant classes and groups. These counter-hegemonic movements represent the grassroots resistance and claim the possibility of another world (Santos & Rodríguez-Garavito, 2005: 5-19).

Furthermore, in the Gramscian approach, the political parties or groups have vital roles in both political and civil society. They promote a revolutionary counter-hegemony, lead popular struggles and strengthen the hegemony of the subaltern groups. They are active in both political society and civil society through politicizing their members and raising consciousness among them. They carry out different activities, develop influential policies in education, and emphasize the political formation and empowerment of the members (Vergara-Camus, 2009: 180-181).

The Gramscian analysis also revealed the importance of the organic intellectuals to transform the society and their role in the emergence of the counter-hegemony (Carnoy, 2001: 272-274). The function of intellectuals within civil society is

included in the moment of hegemony. The organic intellectuals think and organize the elements of a particular social class or a social group. They lead the ideas and aspirations of their groups, and play significant roles in their struggles (Hoare & Smith, 1971: 3). The organic intellectuals forge counter-hegemony by connecting different forms of struggle and developing alternative initiatives. They play a crucial mediating function in the struggle over hegemony between social forces, and support the subaltern classes to promote social change (Morton, 2007: 92).

Another vital issue stated in the Gramscian approach is the distinction between two methods for challenging hegemony: ‘war of maneuver’ and ‘war of position’ (Morton, 2007: 97). The war of maneuver targets directly at achieving the state power. Alternatively, the war of position is a method involving an ideological struggle on the cultural front in civil society. The war of position is a process of creating alternative policies and alternative institutions to bring crucial social changes (Morton, 2007: 190-191). It is an attempt to trigger a long-term process of building a counter-hegemonic movement through consciousness-raising, popular education, community development and self-reliance. It aims to occupy or create new spaces for alternative ways of life in the existing social and economic structures (Meek, 2011: 171). Reconstruction of social relations of production is regarded as an essential element of Gramsci’s war of position, therefore education as well as training and development programs are highlighted in this context (Meek, 2011: 173).

Moreover, the city-countryside relationship is analyzed in the Gramscian approach. The city-countryside relationship has a contradictory structure focusing on their different cultural conceptions and mental attitudes (Morton, 2007: 60). An ‘industrial’ city is regarded as “more progressive than the countryside which depends organically upon it” (Hoare & Smith, 1971: 91). The countryside is formed by the peasantry and agricultural workers. Their background and form of organizing have the characteristics of the subaltern classes referring to the struggle

with the hegemonic power and the attempt to create alternative policies (Morton, 2007: 60-61).

The Gramscian approach contributes valuable theoretical insights concerning the Landless Workers' Movement and its policies, activities and strategies in order to reach its aims. MST as a subaltern group attempts to show the power of the powerless and transform the society through developing alternative policies. The struggles for land and influential activities represent the movement as a counter-hegemonic movement. MST strives for remaking the nature-society relations (Karriem, 2009: 317) and reaching a more just society. It resists the neoliberal policies and capitalist production of nature, and makes a great effort to create an alternative world. The movement promotes an influential education system, and puts special emphasis on self-organization, leadership building and organic intellectuals (Karriem, 2009: 317). It uses the war of position with the combination of land occupations and popular education (Carroll, 2010: 179). As a counter-hegemonic movement, MST does not only oppose the dominant model, but it also develops alternative forms of production and alternative policies and conceptions. As a political party or a political group Gramsci explained, MST promotes counter-hegemonic practices, accompanies popular struggles and strengthens the hegemony of the landless people. Through its land occupations, meetings, marches, demonstrations and production, education and health care systems, the movement offers a concrete alternative for poor landless families in the countryside and also in the cities. According to these aspects, it participates in politics by preserving its autonomy while it promotes mobilization and organization strategies in the civil society (Vergara-Camus, 2009: 178-180). It shows a grassroots resistance aiming to erode the coercive policies and the hegemony of the dominant groups. By means of its policies, strategies, and organizational life in the encampments and settlements MST attempts to demonstrate that 'another world is possible' (Santos & Rodríguez-Garavito, 2005: 2).

2.4. Class dynamics of the MST

It is also important to underline the class dynamics of the Landless Workers' Movement. The MST identifies itself as a class-based movement regarding its characteristics, organizational structure, goals and activities. In order to emphasize these dynamics, the class analysis should be more than a division of the population into strata. Class is both economic and political concept, and more than a set of categories. The relationships, processes and experiences shape the classes.

“Class does not refer simply to workers combined in a unit of production or opposed to a common exploiter in a unit of appropriation. Class implies a connection which extends beyond the immediate process of production and the immediate nexus of extraction, a connection that spans across particular units of production and appropriation. The connections and oppositions contained in the production process are the basis of class; but the relationship among people occupying similar positions in the relations of production is not given directly by the process of production and appropriation.” (Wood, 1982: 61)

According to Ellen Meiksins Wood (2001), class can be analyzed as a structural place and a social relationship. Class as a structural place provides economic evaluation and emphasizes the issues of differences, stratification, inequalities and hierarchy. On the other side, class as a relationship and process provide social and historical evaluation and underlines the relation between those who produce and those who appropriate their surplus labor. Besides, Thompson stresses consciousness, culture and subjective developments in the class analysis. He also argues that common experiences determined by the productive relations are influential in the class analysis. The common experiences and accordingly consciousness about common goals refer the class character of groups or movements (Wood, 2001: 61-62).

“The concept of class as relationship and process stresses that objective relations to the means of production are significant insofar as they establish antagonisms and generate conflicts and struggles; that these conflicts and struggles shape social

experience in class ways.” (Wood, 1982: 50). The crucial point about class analysis is not structural position of the class, rather qualitative social breaks resulted from exploitative production relations (Wood, 2001). The relations of production are the relations among people in the production process and antagonistic link between them.

Class as relationship leads to two relationships, between classes and among members of the same class (Wood, 1982: 59). The relationship between classes focuses on stratification, differences, inequalities, exploitation and hierarchy. This relationship causes to the antagonistic relations, the emergence of social movements and struggles. On the other hand, class as an internal relationship refers relationship among members of a class and “entails certain propositions about how classes are connected to the underlying relations of production” (Wood, 1982: 60). This relationship also underlines the importance of experience as the common experiences affected by production relations raise the class consciousness among members and strengthen the struggles.

Furthermore, class as a process focuses on the process of making class an active historical subject. This analysis looks into the formation of classes and the process of coming to the fore. The process of class consciousness and disposition to behave as a class have a vital place in this analysis (Wood, 1982: 63-64). It is significant to emphasize how objective class oppositions influence social experience and consciousness. The process of conflict and struggle point to the class formation. Therefore, in addition to the structural conceptions of class and inherent antagonism between classes, the analysis of class as a relationship and process involves qualitative social fractions, struggles, common experiences and consciousness.

In addition, Henry Bernstein underlines that class dynamics are considered without the formation of observable sociological classes and recognizable forms

of class identity, consciousness and action (Bernstein, 2010a: 92). According to him, class is based in social relations of production and is identified through its relations with another class (Bernstein, 2010b: 101). The analysis of class relations helps explain processes of commodification and their consequences, even in the absence of observable sociological classes and class action. Bernstein argues that transition to the capitalist agriculture led to transformation of agricultural production and thus the commodification of land and labor power. These capitalist social relations of production and reproduction engendered social differentiation of rural labor and dispossession (Bernstein, 2010a: 81-87). Rural labor is considered a class by virtue of their relations with capital, as exploited by capital in some sense. The exploitation and differentiation caused social struggles and social movements. Social movements and their struggles have their own class dynamics, consequences and effects (Bernstein, 2010a: 90-94).

The Landless Workers' Movement has a discourse of class aiming to unite all its members. On the basis of its historical development, experiences and struggles, the movement has intended to forge a unity of Brazilian landless rural workers exploited by capital. MST occupies unused lands and organizes farming settlements on these lands, "with an explicitly anti-capitalist ideology of establish land as common property for those who work it" (Bernstein, 2010b: 120-121). The class dynamics of MST are based on both economic and political concepts. Its oppositional class character is seen in its historical development, organizational structure, activities and experiences. The MST argues that its members as small farmers and workers in rural Brazil are exploited by the capitalist system. As agricultural workers, their class situation refers their relative powerlessness and subordination in the dominant system (Newby, 1972: 431-432). The MST fights against land-owning elite, it fights against a class. Participation in the movement and its activities expresses its class character (Wolford, 2003: 507). This exploitative relation with other classes has generated conflicts and struggles, and shape their experiences. The experiences of the MST led to raise class

consciousness among its members and empower its activities for their ultimate goals. In addition, another class positioning of the MST is that “within the movement all members are theoretically equal, part of a class in itself” (Wolford, 2003: 507). On the basis of class analysis as an internal relationship, the MST has a systematic organizational framework and productive relations. They have well-organized and egalitarian internal structure in the settlements. The movement also mobilizes its members and resist the dominant system.

Henry Veltmeyer assumed the MST as a “new class-based movement” which appeared on the basis of activists and supporters in the countryside and shaped a nation-wide political discussion about the land issue (Veltmeyer, 1997: 153-154). According to Veltmeyer (1997: 154-156), in these movements rural workers are not separated from the urban life in addition to their rural struggle and activities. They put special emphasis on the intellectuals and participate in political discussions. MST has dealt with the training of leadership cadres, and also organized national training programs for its members. On the other hand, these movements are independent of the political parties. The Landless Workers’ Movement is interested in the politics, and has cordial relations with the Workers Party; but it has always tried to preserve its autonomy. These movements are involved in direct struggle for reaching their aims. The landless movement of Brazil has organized land occupations and other influential struggles. These movements also cooperate with regional organizations and international forums. MST has established close relationships with other organizations and movements that carry out popular struggles. It participates in the Via Campesina, which brings together various rural movements that struggle for food sovereignty, agrarian reform and agricultural policies appropriate for small-scale production. Together with other social movements, MST also participates in the World Social Forum maintaining close relationships with other organizations (Veltmeyer, 1997: 154-156; Friends of the MST Web site). These characteristics, as Veltmeyer supposed, make MST a class-based movement different from the new social movements.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter tried to maintain a theoretical approach to the Landless Workers' Movement of Brazil. Firstly, the MST was analyzed on the basis of new social movement theory. The NSM theory represents some important features compatible with the MST. The movement supports the interests of landless people as an excluded group, and aims to change the consciousness of the participants and to improve social conditions and life standards. Although it mainly deals with social values and culture, there is also a discussion on economic relations. It assumes a nonhierarchical structure while committing to the democracy like the NSMs. Yet the MST exhibits other important features diverging from the NSM theory. It is a class-based socio-political movement that strives for transforming the existing situation of the social relations of production. As Veltmeyer states, MST is a new class-based movement which has formed a nation-wide political discussion about the land issue. In addition, Mariátegui regarded the peasants as an exploited class and claimed that they had the potential for change and revolutionary action. As said by Mariátegui, there is a strong relation between structural changes in the society and the peasant struggles. He underscored the importance of peasant leagues and organizations capable of mobilization of the peasantry. MST can be seen as an influential social movement in terms of its developed organizational structure and effective methods of struggle. In addition to the land occupations, marches, public meetings, demonstrations and other activities, the MST has sustained its struggle in the areas of production, education and health. It has its own production system in the encampments and settlements. Besides, it has established a well-developed education and health systems in its settlements. Thus, through these struggles, it has been progressing in accordance with its ultimate goal of changing the existent dominant system and the society. Moreover, MST is considered as a counter-hegemonic movement by way of Gramscian analysis. It resists the hegemonic project by developing strategies and tactics to define and defend new values and norms that would base an alternative form of social relations. Through its struggle, the movement presents an

alternative world for the landless families. MST is also a movement which has never tried to seize the power. As John Holloway argued, it searches for a way of transforming the world without taking power (Holloway, 2005). It opposes the capitalism and aims to stop making capitalism (Holloway, 2010: 254-255). It attempts to break the walls and open the enclosed via its land occupations, and raises the consciousness about the land issue (Holloway, 2010: 260-261). In addition to establishing a territorial base for the landless people, it also tries to create schools as centers for learning dignity and rebellion, so it organizes and mobilizes them in its struggle (Holloway, 2010: 27-28). Through its land struggles and organizational structure and daily life in its settlements, MST has presented an alternative world and started to change the existing situation.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL ROOTS OF MST AND GENERAL FRAMEWORK BEHIND ITS BIRTH

Throughout much of its history, land issue has always remained as a significant priority on the agenda of Brazil. A highly concentrated ownership structure of Brazil and therewith existence of large idle lands and large numbers of landless workers have revealed a prolonged struggle for land, and made land reform a major matter in Brazil. The Landless Workers' Movement was born from this problematic structure and land struggles. The seeds for the emergence of the MST date back to the earlier times of the country. Therefore, this chapter includes the review of the historical background of the movement and general context of the country in those years.

This chapter deals with the historical background of the MST and historical overview of the land issue in Brazil. Firstly, the chapter starts with the earlier stages of the land issue and looks into various attempts against the land problem of Brazil, for instance Peasant Leagues (*Ligas Camponesas*) and Landless Farmers' Movement (*Movimento dos Agricultores Sem Terra* -MASTER) in the 1950s. This chapter maps out the factors shaped the emergence of MST and genesis of the movement. The general conditions in which MST was born is analyzed in terms of political, social and economic aspects. It also involves the ideological base of the movement and the constitutional matters related to MST. Thus, this chapter aims to ensure a starting point to understand the historical importance of the Landless Workers' Movement.



Figure 1: The States of Brazil

(Source: <http://www.brasilecola.com/brasil/regioes-brasileiras.htm>)

3.1. Early Stages of the Land Issue in Brazil

Brazil has had a highly concentrated ownership structure and land question throughout much of its history. “Land distribution has been both inequitable and contested since the Portuguese began to settle the new colony in the early 1500s” (Wolford, 2003: 501). After the discovery of Brazil, the Portuguese Crown considered how to occupy the new colony and decided the first land policy in 1532 (Alston, Libecap, & Mueller, 1999: 33). During the sixteenth century, settlement of Brazil was slow. In order to promote some settlement and guarantee

the possession of Brazil, the Portuguese Crown defined a new strategy of offering large grants, called *sesmarias*, with relatively unencumbered tenure. These grants gave full property rights over a plot of land (Alston, Libecap, & Mueller, 1999: 34). Under the *sesmaria* law, immense tracts of land were transferred to few chosen people under a condition of usage within a given period of time. In that period, the lands stayed in private hands and were underutilized on a massive scale (Meszaros, 2000: 527). The *sesmaria* system remained the main mechanism for transferring the land until Brazilian independence in 1822. The system was abolished by the new independent government, and any new land allocation laws were not introduced until 1850 (Alston, Libecap, & Mueller, 1999: 34). In those years, the government land was disposed through claiming by occupation. This resulted in the growth of the *latifundia*, which means large and often unproductive land tracts with a single owner (Alston, Libecap, & Mueller, 1999: 34). The disputes on land became more common with the increase in the value of land and the lack of formal property rights. In 1850, the Land Law (*Lei de Terras*) was promulgated and forbade further land acquisitions through occupation or squatting (Alston, Libecap, & Mueller, 1999: 35). This statute made ‘purchase’ the only way to acquire land and privatize possession hampering access to land to poor peasants and immigrants (Vergara-Camus, 2008: 4). Unused lands were passed to a monopoly of the State controlled by a strong class of large landholders (Meszaros, 2000: 527). Through the granting of *sesmarias* and the formation of *latifundia*, the transfer of vast amounts of public land to private ownership intensified the high levels of land concentration.

Land struggles started to appear in that period as a reaction to the skewed ownership structure and concentration of land in the hands of the very few. The Canudos resistance movement –free community of landless- (1893-1897) and the Contestado War –guerilla war for land between peasants and landowners- (1912-1916) were vital examples of these early land disputes showing opposition to the agrarian capitalism paradigm (Friends of the MST Web site). The resistance

against exploitation of peasants and rural workers led to the formation of an autonomous community at Canudos. The organization of Canudos represented the exploited peasants and their efforts to build a new life. The communal nature of the new society formed at Canudos has served as a significant example for all peasants (Wolford, 2010: 78). As another example of the resistance, the Contestado War took place in a contested region between two states –Santa Catarina and Paraná- in 1912 (Wolford, 2010: 42-43). The landless peasants struggled against the landowners as well as the state governments. This war was a crucial “example of the way in which capitalism has traditionally exploited labor and forced fairly isolated communities to mobilize resistance” (Wolford, 2010: 77-78).

In addition to this, during the 1920s and 1930s, the Tenants’ Movement aimed at challenging of the *latifundia* system and underlined the need for a reform transforming the agrarian structure of the country (Mattei, 2005: 342). Then, through the 1940s the debates concerning the redistribution of land have intensified significantly. The rural unrest caused by contradictory land laws and practices began to expand in the country. Agrarian reform became an increasingly controversial political issue in the 1950s and important peasant movements and organizations began to emerge as a part of struggle for land and agrarian reform (Wolford, 2010: 43).

Peasant Leagues (*Ligas Camponesas*) were significant steps of the struggle in these early stages of the land issue. They were established around 1945 in almost all states of Brazil by organizing thousands of peasants in response to the agrarian problem. They were social organizations that gathered peasants who owned their land, sharecroppers, occupants, and subsistence farmers (Harnecker, 2003: 16). The Peasant Leagues were voluntary organizations with no formal link to the state. Although the Brazilian Communist Party (*Partido Comunista Brasileiro-PCB*) supported the foundation of these Leagues, come 1947, they were forcefully

constrained and eventually closed. The Peasant Leagues resurrected in Pernambuco seven years later, which were standing up against expropriation of the land they worked. With the deepening commercialization of agriculture in the 1950s, since then, new leagues were created in that and other states of northeast Brazil, as well as other regions (Harnecker, 2003: 16). They organized several meetings and congresses to refine their demand for legislation of an efficient land reform (Caldeira, 2008: 134) that redistributes land-use rights (Pereira, 1997: 91). As commercialization has deepened, peasants were negatively influenced in both material terms and in status.

Peasant Leagues had prominent repertoire of collective action owing to its large membership, and effectively claimed access to land in reaction to extremely unequal patterns of landownership (Janvry, 1981: 199). While insisting on agrarian reform, they also engaged in direct actions such as land occupations (Pereira, 1997: 155). They occupied land and held out against expulsion to improve the living conditions of rural workers. In doing so, they fiercely opposed the power of the *latifundia* owning families in the region. Their struggle for resistance against the large landowners who wanted to expel peasants from their lands became increasingly strong. Some sections of the leagues attempted to form guerrilla groups to pressure for radical reforms in land rights (Harnecker, 2003: 16).

However, the 1964 military coup repressed and destroyed the Peasant Leagues. Many rural activists were arrested and their groups were dispersed by the military. The Leagues were co-opted and disappeared in this period (Ondetti, 2008: 52). They have been regarded as the basis of the subsequent land struggles and resistance against capitalism and exploitation of the peasants. Their activities have pointed to the significance of the land struggle and historical development process of the peasants' resistance.

Union of Farmers and Agricultural Workers (*União dos Lavradores e Trabalhadores Agrícolas do Brasil*- ULTAB) was founded by the PCB in 1954 while the Peasant Leagues were re-emerging in Pernambuco. It was an association of rural workers organized at the municipal, state and national levels. It sought to coordinate various peasant associations (Harnecker, 2003: 16). This union was organized in almost all states except Pernambuco and Rio Grande do Sul, where other peasant organizations were already powerful. The ULTAB principally had strong influence in the states of Sao Paulo, Parana and Rio de Janeiro (Harnecker, 2003: 16). The PCB controlled the ULTAB to form a political alliance between workers and peasants with this attempt (Caldeira, 2008: 135). Thus, the ULTAB promoted the PCB's line of an anti-feudal, anti-imperialist "worker-peasant" alliance, and also moderate agrarian reform (Pereira, 1997: 93).

Furthermore, **Landless Farmers' Movement** (*Movimento dos Agricultores Sem Terra* -MASTER) was formed in the state of Rio Grande do Sul at the end of the 1950s (Caldeira, 2008: 135). MASTER aimed to resist the eviction of three hundred families who had occupied land in Encruzilhada do Sul (Harnecker, 2003: 17). Afterward, it expanded all over the state and was supported by the governor Leonel Brizola. Even though the support of the government to the MASTER lasted until 1962, its activities were violently repressed in 1963. The movement eventually became increasingly weak and was completely subjugated after the 1964 military coup (Harnecker, 2003: 17).

MASTER was different from the Peasant Leagues in its strategies. It focused generally on conquering a plot of land, not fighting to stay on it. It started to set up camps nearby the *latifundia* in the 1960s (Harnecker, 2003: 17). It had usually refrained from land occupations, and chose camping next to properties it wanted authorities to expropriate. When the authorities promised land to the families of the MASTER, they generally returned to their homes. It was usually criticized by

rural activists because of lack of a radical political consciousness (Ondetti, 2008: 80).

In 1961, ULTAB organized the First National Congress of Farmers and Agricultural Workers in which delegates from the Peasant Leagues and MASTER participated (Harnecker, 2003: 17). They exchanged ideas in order to promote unionization and create labor legislation. Hence, the congress provided a stimulus to intensify land struggles. In the early 1960s, local and state level meetings were held for founding a federation of rural workers. The Catholic Church and the PCB cooperated for this purpose and eventually reached an agreement to form **National Confederation of Agricultural Workers** (*Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores na Agricultura*- CONTAG) in 1963 (Harnecker, 2003: 17). CONTAG attempted to pressure authorities concerning land issue and supported the agrarian reform, union autonomy, land occupations and strikes (Pereira, 1997: 131). Because of the 1964 military coup, the federation and its unions were seized by the government. By 1968, CONTAG started again to act and promoted the formation of rural unions and federations in Brazil. It shaped its major political goal as agrarian reform to unite farmers, workers and the landless people (Pereira, 1997: 353).

3.2. The Years of Dictatorship (Between 1964 and 1978) and Its Influence on the Peasant Movement

The military coup took place in March 1964, and the armed forces of Brazil seized power. The dictatorship violently repressed all the peasant movements (Harnecker, 2003: 17). Several military governments did not implement any land distribution programs. “Their only plan was to establish the unsuccessful Agricultural Colonization Project, whose strategy –to settle all the borders of the country – was more concerned with national security than with transformation of Brazil’s agrarian structure” (Mattei, 2005: 342). The military focused on the agrarian problem by redistributing land through modernization of agricultural

production and colonization. The military planned to shift from ‘men without land’ to a ‘land without men’ (Wolford, 2003: 504). The military’s plan concerning agrarian issue “involved settling 200.000 families in the sparsely populated savannahs of the Centre-West and the Amazon Basin” (Wolford, 2003: 504). Besides, the other plan was the modernization program of the military government which targeted large-scale producers for subsidized modernization (Wolford, 2003: 504). During that time, policies favored large-scale production, which had direct negative impact on small-scale and family farming.

The period after 1964 military coup was characterized by deepening authoritarianism. During the period of the military dictatorship, the Brazilian countryside witnessed violent conflicts, as socio-economic inequalities in rural areas became more severe. The struggle over land was intensified, as the modernization attempts perpetuated the historical problem of concentration of land in the hands of the very few and very privileged (Plummer & Ranum, 2002: 18). The military embarked on a campaign of repression aimed to destroy the Left. Many rural activists were killed, arrested, went missing or self-exiled. The Peasant Leagues and MASTER were dissolved. Political rights were limited and many politicians were barred from engaging in politics (Ondetti, 2008: 52). The authorities of the military government justified these developments as necessary for restoring economic growth and pointing at the threat of communist subversion (Ondetti, 2008: 52).

In the late 1960s, the Brazilian economy recovered rapidly, and entered a period of remarkable growth known as the ‘Brazilian miracle’. The authoritarian government gave priority to the revitalization of the economy. “Tough stabilization measures were the initial policy response, but gradually a longer-term strategy was elaborated that centered on expanding Brazil’s industrial sector” (Ondetti, 2008: 58). The foreign investment was also attracted in that period. “During the economic miracle period of 1968-1974 growth averaged more than 11

percent a year” (Ondetti, 2008: 58). The government focused on domestic manufacture and attempted to make the transition from an underdeveloped agricultural economy to a developed industrial one. The largest landowners were supported with incentives and resources for modernization. The period was called ‘conservative modernization’, yet it was seen as ‘painful modernization’ which had devastating social effects (Wolford, 2004: 411). At the end of the 1970s, “the country lived under the manner of the ‘Brazilian Miracle’, but for the rural poor, it was more like the ‘Brazilian Plague’: unemployment and migration of workers from rural to urban areas” (Friends of the MST Web site).

In addition, the military’s efforts to keep their control over political activities were gradually challenged by Brazilian society. Civil society opposed the military regime and its policies. The most influential opposition was the Catholic Church (Ondetti, 2008: 53). The church progressively opposed the dictatorial regime and became a critical ally of both rural and urban workers. By the early 1970s, the Brazilian Catholic Church became an active agent in favor of social change (Cadji, 2000: 32). At that time, Latin American clerics developed liberation theology, which defended that the Bible itself calls for the faithful act against the social injustice (Ondetti, 2008: 53). That approach favored the preferential option for the poor, and so the activists of the church supported a vision of grassroots democracy and popular participation. Further, in 1975, **Pastoral Land Commission** (*Comissão Pastoral da Terra- CPT*) was founded as a “nation-wide ecumenical organization aimed to link together, assist and energize Christians serving among the peasantry” (Carter, 2003: 11). It was an agency founded to help rural workers to defend their rights. CPT played a fundamental role in developing contacts between local and regional leaders. It was mainly active in the countryside, and was a key force behind the land struggles and union movement (Carter, 2003: 57). It also organized meetings with peasant families and searched solutions to their problems. Besides, CPT arranged organizational campaigns and attracted support from different sections of the society (Carter, 2003: 67). It

underlined the importance of smallholder villages as the ideal social context for the propagation of Christian values. Alongside the opposition of the church, the rural unions also stood against official policies in the countryside. They grew rapidly during the military years and struggled for land. CONTAG developed a strategy for pressuring authorities to pass law related to the land issues, and supported local unions and federations (Ondetti, 2008: 54).

Throughout the 1970s, discontent with the military rule increased gradually. The authorities claimed that they had continued the process of democratization leading to a democratic 'opening' (*abertura*). Nevertheless, they insisted on hampering the opposition forces. This process of political opening was accompanied by a broad wave of social protest (Ondetti, 2008: 55). These years of military rule brought major socio-economic changes. In the late 1960s and 1970s, Brazil attained a rapid economic expansion, and was seen as an important example of state-led industrialization (Ondetti, 2008: 57-65). However, this new model of agro-industrial development and modernization of Brazilian agriculture deepened social inequalities and aroused social transformation in both urban and rural areas (Plummer & Ranum, 2002: 18). The development was highly unequal in different regions and concentration of wealth became a bigger problem. The modernization attempts and increasing competitiveness of agriculture made access to farmland more difficult for rural people. The large-scale and export-oriented production and modernization attempts of this period resulted to the detriment of small-scale and family farming. Technological change and the shift to commercial crops reduced the need for large permanent labor force (Ondetti, 2008: 60). Hence, it speeded up the dismissal of resident wage workers and reduced the amount of available land for tenant farmers and sharecroppers. High land prices made it harder to obtain farmland (Ondetti, 2008: 60-61). This process caused violent expulsion of working families from land and increase in rural-urban migration. The south of Brazil was deeply affected by these changes and experienced the most intense rural exodus (Plummer & Ranum, 2002: 18).

In addition, the military government, during the 1970s, opened up new agricultural areas, especially in the Amazon basin (Ondetti, 2008: 62-63). It conducted a colonization program in the Amazon; in this way the military could secure the northwest border of the country through effective possession (Wolford, 2003: 504). Besides, “the military authorities sought to accelerate the occupation of Amazon basin in order to solidify the country’s claims to its massive share of this region” (Ondetti, 2008: 62). They proposed generous incentives to invest in agriculture or industry in those regions. Furthermore, in 1970, **National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform** (*Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária*- INCRA) was created in order to settle landless people from other parts of Brazil in colonized lands. “A land without men for men without land” became the motto of the program (Ondetti, 2008: 63). But only a limited number of people benefited from this colonization program. People compelled to immigrate were discouraged by poor soil and infrastructure. As the projects were not coupled with construction of sufficient infrastructure and provision of basic services, they were deemed to fail (Ondetti, 2008: 63). Some people drawn to those regions by government would return back their home and joined the peasant movements (Wolford, 2010: 45-46). Moreover, in many cases, INCRA expropriated lands which had been occupied by rural movements and trade unions (Caldeira, 2008: 139). During the second half of the 1970s and early 1980s, INCRA retreated to a reactive policy position regarding land conflicts through expropriation and the formation of settlement projects on the disputed land (Alston, Libecap, & Mueller, 1999: 43).

3.3. Years between 1978 and 1984: Struggles for the Emergence of the MST

In addition to all developments, the struggles that paved the way for the emergence of the MST started in 1978 with social mobilizations in the south Brazil, and the process lasted until 1984 when the MST was officially founded. Mobilization of landless workers began during the late 1970s and early 1980s in many areas of Brazil. The pressure for land reform was their main goal. The South of Brazil witnessed the most intense activities, larger protest actions and a much more extensive organizational network (Ondetti, 2008: 65). This movement provided the impetus behind the formation of the MST.

Land reform protests in the South first started in Rio Grande do Sul where activists of the Catholic Church linked these demands for land into the political activities. These efforts confronted them with authorities. The activists of the CPT also initiated to organize meetings with the families and tried to find solution to the problems about colonization program. Then, in 1979, the families embarked on a campaign to pressure authorities for land (Ondetti, 2008: 65-67). They entered two properties that had been occupied earlier –Macali and Brilhante- and constructed a camp in September 1979 (Ondetti, 2008: 66-67). With the help of the CPT, the occupation attracted media attention and gained public support. The police arrived the following day, and threatened to expel the families. Women with their children placed themselves in the first row. The police eventually backed off, and negotiations began with the governor. The authorities authorized the landless families to stay on that piece of land and withdrew the police force (Harnecker, 2003: 19-20). The occupations of Macali and Brilhante were the first examples of conquering lands during the military dictatorship. These successful land occupations inherently encouraged new occupations in the region, and the regions of Anonni, Santa Catarina, Parana, Sao Paulo, and Mato Grosso do Sul were also occupied in those years (Harnecker, 2003: 20).

The camp in Encruzilhada Natalino is particularly important in understanding MST and its development in this period. The conflict around this camp seemed to inspire mobilization of peasants throughout the southern region (Ondetti, 2008: 65). The Encruzilhada Natalino camp was created as a result of the previous experiences in the struggle. It began on December 8, 1980. A settler came to this region, and “installed his tent at the fork of the roads leading to Ronda Alta, Sarandi and Passo Fundo, in the Ronda Alta Municipality of Rio Grande do Sul” (Harnecker, 2003: 20). Then, more landless families arrived at this strategic camp from all over the region. The government authorities made unsuccessful efforts to counteract the occupants. The clergy and lay activists played a vital role in organizing and supporting the camp. The CPT activists also helped the settlers with material, political and moral support. Together with the support of the religious groups, labor unions and human right groups also offered support and encouragement to the families (Ondetti, 2008: 68). Moreover, the families in the camp began organizing in groups, commissions and sectors, and they edited a newspaper called ‘*Sem Terra*’. Consequently, the camp became a symbol of resistance to the regime. “The struggle at Encruzilhada Natalino, in which peasants from eight municipalities of the region participated, was reflected in all Brazil, showing the need and the importance of agrarian reform” (Harnecker, 2003: 21).

The Encruzilhada Natalino facilitated the acceleration of the landless movement’s diffusion in the South. The peasant mobilization expanded with the support of civil society and public opinion. The CPT and other groups continued their struggle for agrarian reform in the South. Therefore, they organized campaigns and occupations for reaching their goals, and promoted a broader process of organization at the regional and national level (Ondetti, 2008: 70-71). Alongside of the CPT, other church-linked organizations also played crucial role in organizing and supporting the landless people. The rural union leaders made considerable contributions to the process in the South as they helped those people

to expand their activities and ideas related to the movement (Ondetti, 2008: 72-74). All of these organizations took active roles in mapping out the strategies of the movement and dealing with authorities, media, and other external actors.

Although these land struggles rapidly extended to the rest of the country, a nationwide land struggle did not rise. The activities were often limited to the land occupations lacking a coherent and extensive organizational structure. In early 1982, CPT started to organize regional meetings of rural workers paved the way for a national meeting. The national meeting was held in September 1982. The rural workers and union leaders attended to the meeting representing all major regions of the country (Ondetti, 2008: 88). Yet this attempt was not accomplished to found a nationwide organization.

Following these attempts, the Landless Movement of the Southern Region decided to create a national entity. "It organized a meeting in January 1984 at a Catholic Church facility in the city of Cascavel, in Parana." The meeting resulted in the establishment of the Landless Workers' Movement (MST) (Ondetti, 2008: 89). MST would struggle for both agrarian reform and a more just, fraternal society. It would be an autonomous, worker-led national organization, and independent from the church, political parties and unions (Friends of the MST Web site). According to the National Coordinator João Pedro Stedile (Plummer & Ranum, 2002: 19), the emergence of the MST was based on three basic factors. First one was the economic crisis that put an end to the industrialization process. Second was the liberation theology of the Catholic Church; and third one was the increasing climate of struggle against the military dictatorship which was transforming local labor conflicts into political battles against the government.

3.4. Conditions that Led to Emergence of MST

During the period before the birth of MST, the military regime became weaker and Brazil began to experience a process of democratization. People started to express their discontent and participated in the struggles. Against the policies of the government, the rural opposition and combative unionism existed in that era. The social groups objected the government's agricultural policies and claimed agrarian reform (Harnecker, 2003: 18-19). From 1965 to 1984, the military dictatorship implemented modernization and liberalization policies. The military rule deepened the socio-economic problems, caused social protests in the society, and awoke the civil society in Brazil (Harnecker, 2003: 18-19). In this regard, João Pedro Stedile emphasized that (Ondetti, 2008: 95):

“We cannot disconnect the rise of the MST from the political situation of Brazil in that era. That is, the MST didn't arise just from the will of the peasant. It could only become an important social movement because it coincided with a broader struggle for the democratization of the country. The struggle for agrarian reform added to the resurgence of the workers' strikes, and the struggle for the democratization of the country.”

In terms of the economic context, capitalist modernization and agro-industrial development took place in Brazil during the 1970s. It brought mechanization of agricultural production and directed agricultural exports (Harnecker, 2003: 18). This modernization process caused economic and social problems for rural families. At the end of the 1970s, the 'Brazilian miracle' disappeared along with the industrial crisis and worsened economic situation of the country. The unemployment increased in the cities, and employment opportunities for the expelled peasants diminished. Moreover, the agricultural colonization project failed and many problems for the peasants occurred (Harnecker, 2003: 18). Thus, they attempted to resist in the countryside and struggled for land as they had become the potential members of the landless workers movement.

Furthermore, from the ideological view, the MST has been inspired by Marxism, the Cuban Revolution and other leftist approaches as well as liberation theology (Harnecker, 2003: 19). The MST is a class-based movement which fights for land and land reform, and strives for a just and fraternal society (Friends of the MST Web site). In addition, the MST and its activities have been based on the Brazilian Constitution of 1988 as the Constitution requires land serve a social function (Article 5). It also requires the Brazilian government ‘expropriate for the purpose of agrarian reform, rural property that is not performing its social function’ (Article 184) (Friends of the MST Web site). It determines that “only those properties which are fulfilling their social function will receive legal protection, in other words, unproductive land must be appropriated”. “In not being appropriated by virtue of the inertia of the public power, the occupations are legitimate and necessary (Meszaros, 2000: 531)”. Article 186 of the Constitution states that “if land is not fulfilling its ‘social responsibility to be productive’ then the federal government is empowered to expropriate the area from the owner” (Wolford, 2004: 412). But in practice, the law is rarely upheld without aggressive actions undertaken by landless groups. The Brazilian state reinforces the contradictions between formal law and practice by sometimes legalizing the occupations and sometimes criminalizing them. The article 186 provides the basis for the MST’s program of agrarian reform (Wolford, 2004: 412).

3.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the emergence of the MST dates back to the earlier times of the country. The developments and the earliest attempts against the land problem of the country constituted the seeds of the Landless Workers’ Movement. “The historical tradition of resistance legitimates mobilization in present day Brazil because it helps to construct resistance as inevitable and timeless.” (Wolford, 2010: 79).

The economic disaster of the late seventies, the changing orientation of the Catholic Church and the growing climate of struggle against the military rule represent the genesis of the movement. The capitalist modernization and agricultural restructuring increased land concentration and rural outmigration, and engendered social tension and land invasions. Thus, this process eventually led to the emergence of the MST. The historical roots of the movement resulted in the appearance of its main objective as 'winning land'. MST started to fight for the land and land reform. Besides all these, through its historical experiences, the movement realized that the struggle to remain on the land is very important as well as struggle for land. MST began to mobilize landless people and participate in the politics for achieving its goals. On the basis of its historical roots, the movement has mainly opposed the economic, social and political conditions of Brazil, and targeted structural changes in the society.

CHAPTER 4

THE EVOLUTION OF THE LANDLESS WORKERS' MOVEMENT

Since its foundation in 1984, the Landless Workers' Movement of Brazil has struggled for land distribution and agrarian reform and has fought against injustice and social inequality in rural areas. In this process, there has always been a close interaction between MST and the political system of Brazil. The political environment has shaped the movement's development over the years. The agenda and the policies of the governments have led to changes in the movement's growth trajectory. MST has put emphasis on the participation of civil society and political society from its foundation until present. The movement has always determined its political strategy with respect to the institutional politics (Vergara-Camus, 2009: 185-186). MST has also been very conscious of the need to maintain its autonomy. It has participated in politics without transforming itself into a political party or subordinating itself to a party (Vergara-Camus, 2008: 20). In this regard, the movement has rejected the idea of becoming organically linked to a party. MST has established a close relationship with the politics and used it as a part of its mobilization strategy as Gramscian approach states that the participation in the politics should be related to the objectives of mobilization and organization in civil society (Vergara-Camus, 2009: 188). Therefore, it has explicitly remained autonomous from the state and political parties.

This chapter focuses on the development of MST and its relationship with the political system of the country. The major points of change in the movement's development are analyzed with regard to the political stance of different governments and their changing policies about land issue. MST and land issue between the years of 1985 and 1994 are analyzed in the first part of the chapter. After this part, the period of Cardoso administration is reviewed on the basis of relation with the MST. This part includes the changing stance of Cardoso

government towards the movement and the government's different approaches to the agrarian reform. The following part deals with the development of the MST during Lula administration. The final part of the chapter tries to look at the recent developments of the movement.

Table 1: The Number of Occupations in Brazil 1988-2010

(Source: DATALUTA, Banco de Dados da Luta Pela Terra -Database of Land Struggle, 2011)

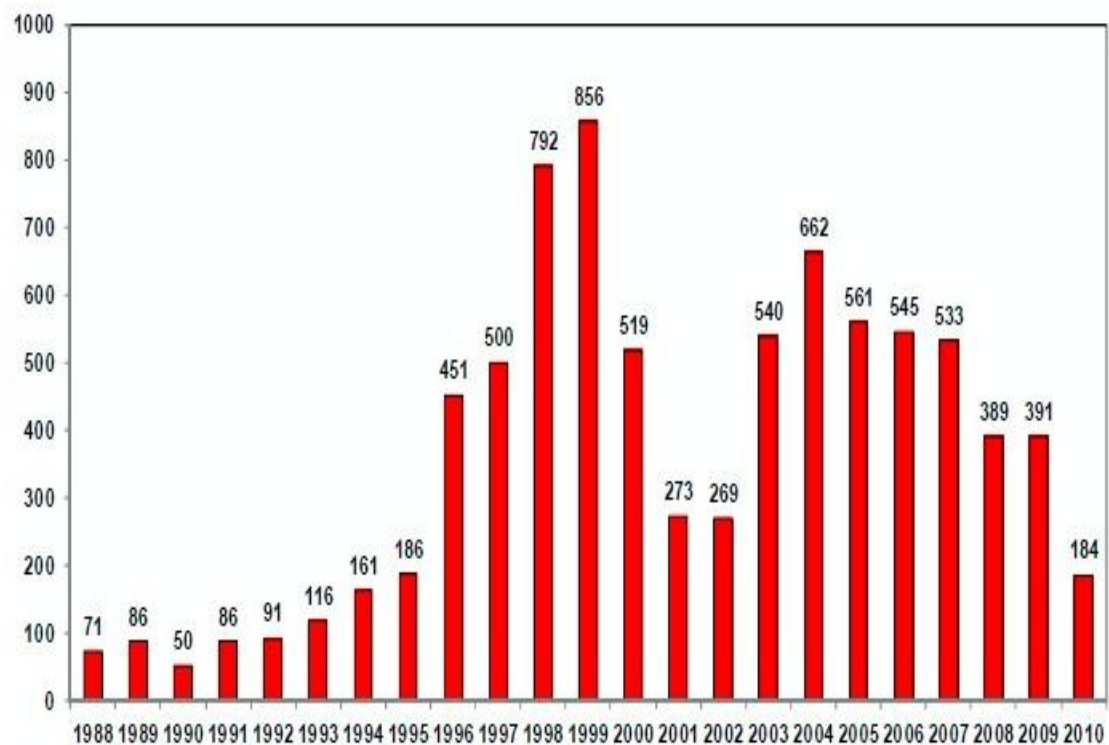




Figure 2: The Number of Occupations in Brazil 1988-2010
(Source: DATALUTA 2011)

Table 2: The Number of Families in Occupations in Brazil 1988-2010
(Source: DATALUTA 2011)

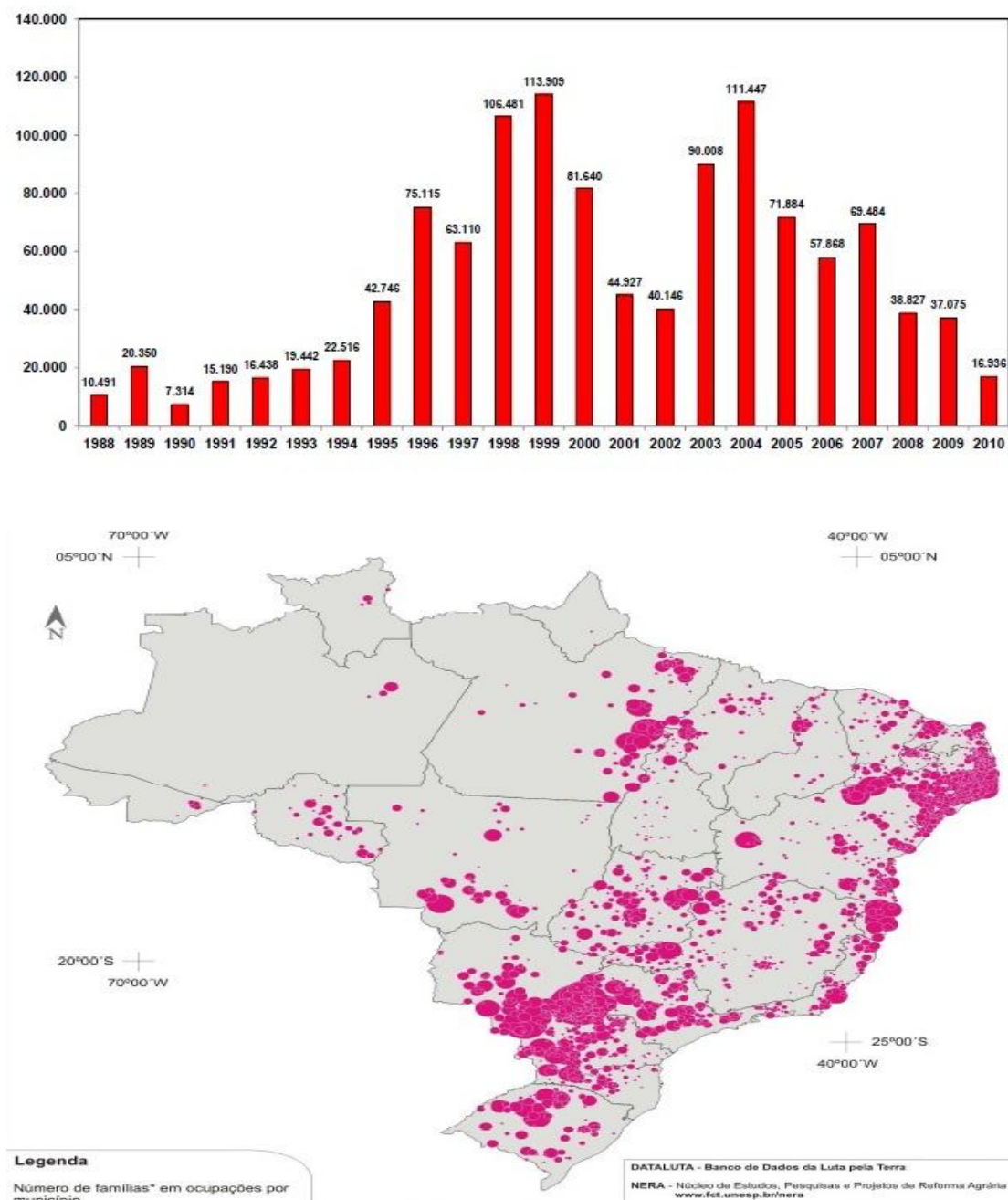


Figure 3: The Number of Families in Occupations in Brazil 1988-2010
(Source: DATALUTA 2011)

4.1. The Period between 1985 and 1994: Initial Phase of MST

The MST had become a crucial social movement by the end of 1984. The movement was broadly organized in the southern part of Brazil, but then it started to expand to other areas of the country. The year of 1985 was a turning point for Brazil: the election of Tancredo Neves put an end to long years of military dictatorship and a new political period began (Harnecker, 2003: 23). The Landless Workers' Movement held its First Congress in 1985. The representatives from the MST discussed agrarian issues and determined a new slogan –“Occupation, the only solution”. (Harnecker, 2003: 23). After the congress, important occupations took place throughout the country. The initial attempt of the movement proved its commitment to the land struggles in order to reach a land reform.

Following the Congress, MST organized national meetings to consolidate itself during the second half of the 1980s. In the period of President José Sarney (1985-1990), while social protest activities declined in both urban and rural areas, MST grew considerably (Ondetti, 2008: 107). In 1986, the movement held its First National Meeting and discussed the organization of the settlers and forms of production to encourage. In addition, in 1986, Program for Special Credit for Agrarian Reform (*Programa de Crédito Especial para Reforma Agrária* - Procerá) was carried out to provide peasants with credits to buy seeds and the necessary equipment to work the land (Harnecker, 2003: 24-25). The Third National Meeting of MST, which was held in 1987, focused on the strategies to improve the organization of settlements. After the meeting, various rural associations were launched through the country along with training courses for peasants and settlers on the matters concerning agricultural production (Harnecker, 2003: 26-27). A new slogan “Occupy, resist, produce” was adopted on the basis of the importance of production in the Fifth National Meeting in 1989. The leading members of the movement argued that the settlements had to create their own model for agriculture besides an alternative social structure (Harnecker, 2003: 26). Together with its occupations and efforts in the settlements, MST also underlined the

importance of political struggle to pressure the government to take decision on the land question eventually turning into an extensive agrarian reform.

The period of President Collor de Mello (1990-1992) was a difficult period for the movement due to a hard stabilization program and market-based structural reforms (Harnecker, 2003: 27). President Collor de Mello repressed social movements in general and took an offensive stance against the MST in particular (Pereira J. M., 2005: 16). Faced with harsh political repression, occupation activities declined in this period (Ondetti, 2008: 109-110). In 1990, the Second MST National Congress was held, and after the congress the first cooperatives for production appeared. For a new alternative way of productive life in the countryside, the movement aimed to develop a process of cooperation among its members to be able to better organize the settlers and rural workers (Harnecker, 2003: 27).

The government of Itamar Franco (1992-1994) was a relative relief for the Landless Movement as this government lowered the level of repression towards social movements (Pereira J. M., 2005: 16). His government had a more moderate position vis-à-vis struggles for land and negotiated with the MST. For the first time, a president received a delegation officially in this period (Harnecker, 2003: 28). During the Itamar Franco's government, there was a slight acceleration in land occupations and the relationship between the movement and the government was emphasized for progress in the agrarian issues.

During the period between 1985 and 1994, the movement continued to grow and its opposition did not fall into a sharp decline even during the Collor years (Ondetti, 2008: 109). Both the number of land occupations and the number of landless families involved in the occupations increased in those years (Ondetti, 2008: 109-110). Through its meetings and policy decisions, the movement began to grow gradually into an autonomous and cohesive organization. In addition to

land occupations as MST's core tactic, it developed non-occupation protest tactics to reach an effective land reform for a more just society. The movement in this period focused particularly on networking and developing its organizational structure through participating in the political matters as Gramsci stressed (Ondetti, 2008: 112-117). Since the first conference held in 1985, the Landless Movement has determined its political principles taking into account both its genuine struggle for land and agrarian reform, and country's economic and political context (Elkisch M., 2005: 33). The MST has gotten involved in the politics taking important decisions related with its political strategy. Consequently in the course of the 1990s, as MST was at the forefront of this process, the landless movement has become stronger and the conflicts have broadened shown by the number of occupations and rural settlements (Fernandes, 2009: 90).

4.2. The Cardoso Government and Its Different Approaches to Agrarian Reform

Fernando Henrique Cardoso was the president between 1995 and 2003, and served for two consecutive terms. The two terms of Cardoso government were characterized by different approaches to the agrarian reform and the landless movement. The government in the first term focused on the elimination of agrarian question through a policy of extensive settlements. In the second term, the Cardoso government moved away from its attitude to MST and embraced a strategy opposed to the landless movement. Because the political situation of the country has important influence on the movement as Gramscian analysis underlined, these two terms influenced the movement and its activities significantly. The MST changed its position according to the government's stance (Fernandes, 2009: 94). While between 1995 and 1999, the landless movement experienced the process of takeoff, the movement went through a period of decline between the years of 2000 and 2002.

The first term of Cardoso government brought a significant period of rise to the landless movement. Faced with accelerated occupation activities all over the country, the government implemented an important agrarian reform program compatible with neoliberal orthodoxy (Ondetti, 2008: 140). The Cardoso government attempted to address the agrarian problem through a strategy of allowing extensive settlements. As a result, the land struggle, through the occupations, grew intensely during the first term of the Cardoso government (Fernandes, 2009: 94). The Third MST Congress was held within this favorable context in July 1995 and decisions were summed up in the slogan: “Agrarian reform is everyone’s struggle”. The Congress with this slogan aimed at expanding the address of the land struggle linking it to a struggle against the neoliberal policies of Cardoso government. Particularly, in this congress, MST’s agrarian program was crafted targeting a reorganization of the countryside in Brazil (Harnecker, 2003: 29).

Despite his rather friendly position vis-à-vis MST, President Cardoso set out his government’s objective of consolidating stability through a series of market-oriented structural reforms including privatization and trade liberalization. In line with this, he followed neoliberal policies and a market-led land reform program (Ondetti, 2008: 143-146). His monetary policy focused on deregulation of the domestic market and privatization program (Calle, 2002: 52). These neoliberal policies led to open Brazilian markets to imports, attract foreign capital and privatize government enterprises (Sallum Jr. & Palacios, 2000: 747-749). Therefore, agrarian reform lost its political importance as Cardoso’s top priority shifted to stabilization of the economy (Deere & Medeiros, 2007: 86). Because of these policies, agricultural producers faced severe difficulties such as increased agricultural imports, pushed down domestic agricultural prices and increased debt burdens. MST opposed to the neoliberal policies advocated by President Cardoso and promoted by international financial and development institutions (Calle, 2002: 52).

As a reaction to President Cardoso's neoliberal stand, the landless movement expanded enormously during the period between 1995 and 1999. The pressure of the movement increased and land occupation activities as well as marches, demonstrations and public meetings multiplied (Ondetti, 2008: 155-163). The new agricultural communities were formed despite insufficient support from the government (Carter, 2010: 196). MST intensified its mobilization activities as well as its attempts to convince the public opinion concerning the land struggles (Deere & Medeiros, 2007: 87).

President Cardoso's reelection in 1999 inaugurated a new phase for MST as government's strategy of combating MST gained a much greater consistency. Consequently, the number of occupations decreased and the power of popular mobilization of the MST weakened (Pereira J. M., 2005: 22). In his second term, the Cardoso government followed an opposite strategy which criminalized the land occupations. A certain effort was made to restrict the protest of the MST through restraining the financial support for its activities. The government also set off a media campaign to disfavor the public image of the MST (Carter, 2010: 196). The movement sought to "stem the damage to its reputation caused by the corruption charges made by the media and government" (Ondetti, 2008: 188). In 2000, the landless movement entered a process of decline. Land occupations dropped abruptly and the government's commitment to agrarian reform worsened further. The Cardoso government sought to display that it would no longer respond to the occupations (Ondetti, 2008: 179-180). The government tried to destroy the movement's activities becoming the main adversary of the MST in this period. Despite the decreases in the land occupations, the opposition between MST and the government has intensified rural conflicts (Fernandes, 2005: 338). The government's unfriendly stance and decline in the land redistribution triggered the protest tactics of the MST.

In early 2000s, the Landless Workers' Movement structured its policies and actions to be able to survive in the market conditions imposed by the neoliberal model of the Cardoso government. MST argued that neoliberal economic policies and structural adjustment programs implemented in this term opening the national markets to imports, attracting foreign capital, eliminating social services and privatizing the state enterprises had negative effects on Brazilian agriculture. For these reasons, the movement took the offensive stance during the Cardoso government, expanded its actions throughout the country and gained popular support (Sallum Jr. & Palacios, 2000: 772).

4.3. The Period of Lula Government (2003-2010)

After the Cardoso government and his neoliberal program, Luiz Inácio “Lula” da Silva from the Brazil's Workers' Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*- PT) came to the presidency in 2003. As the PT and Lula had supported the radical definition of agrarian reform and the decisions of MST, it was expected that this new government would uphold the interests of MST (Tilly, Kennedy, & Ramos, 2010). During the election campaign of Lula, it was asserted that the PT would support agricultural domestic market model and conduct an agrarian reform in cooperation with MST. Before the election there were rising expectations about this new government, but, right after the election of Lula as president in 2002, the position of the PT started to change. However, the Lula government failed to implement an agrarian reform (Welch, 2011: 27-28). In this period, agrarian reform was subordinated to the economic objectives leaving out of its political content.

In the first three months of the Lula government, MST ceased all direct enforcement actions and manifestations with the expectation of cooperation (Fontaine, 2008-2009: 138-139). Yet, the government through its political and economic policies failed to make progress regarding the agrarian issue. The limited commitment to agrarian reform and slow pace of land distribution raised

questions about the willingness of Lula's government to carry out an efficient agrarian reform. (Vergara-Camus, 2009: 187). Thus, Lula government could not overtake the demands of the MST related to the reorientation of agricultural policy.

In the initial years of the presidency, many Brazilians believed that the Lula government would do more than its predecessors to help Brazil's poor and disadvantaged groups. Faced with the expectations, Lula government was forced to make the case that this new government departed from "following the footsteps of his nominally more conservative predecessor" (Ondetti, 2008: 203). Yet, during the overall period of President Lula, the government did not develop any fundamental change compared to the policies of Cardoso government. Lula followed the economic program of Cardoso with an emphasis on fiscal and monetary discipline. In contrast with the framework of his party, Lula adopted a neoliberal economic program implementing a tight fiscal policy with modest economic growth (Ondetti, 2008: 203). The management of the economy in this process established a close relationship between the government and private sector and also with international financial institutions. These developments of the Lula government created tensions within his party and the society.

Furthermore, the Lula government did not make crucial advances in the land reform area. Land redistribution stagnated in this period, and the government failed to fulfill the expectations of landless people (Vergara-Camus, 2009: 187). During Lula's first term in office, the rate of land redistribution was actually lower than that of the Cardoso era (Carter, 2010: 197). Nevertheless, the government provided better support for small farmers and brought positive changes for MST. For instance, the Lula government increased the grants to the landless and poor (Ondetti, 2008: 207). However, these supports were both insufficient and inefficient to uphold smallholding agricultural system (Caldeira, 2008: 140). On the other hand, the government established a close relationship

with the agribusiness companies. Agribusiness was a keystone of the government's overall economic policy as it was seen as a development strategy to integrate the Brazilian economy into the world economy (Welch, 2011). Agribusiness was also part of the alliance that supported Lula in the elections. The government refinanced the agribusiness's debts and provided new credits for investment. In turn, these developments led to colonization of Amazonian lands and deforestation of these areas (Fernandes, 2009: 96). In addition to the environmental consequences of expansion of agribusiness, negative social consequences became evident. The alliance between big landowners, chemical-agricultural transnational companies and the government had unfavorable impacts on the rural workers. As a result, land concentration increased in the states and farming declined (Welch, 2011). These led to disappointment about Lula's agricultural policies and raised questions and struggles among the society and social movements.

On the other hand, the government started some social policy initiatives targeting the poorest families, such as Bolsa Família (Family Grant or Family Stipend) or an anti-poverty plan called Zero Hunger (Ondetti, 2008: 204). These direct cash transfer programs aimed to provide a basic income to the poor families, and reduce short-term poverty and fight long-term poverty. Although these programs were criticized for inefficiency and clientelism, they were extremely popular in that period and became one of the biggest political assets of the Lula government (Tilly, Kennedy, & Ramos, 2010). Bolsa Família was a cash-grant program which reached a lot of Brazilian poor families and reduced extreme poverty in the country (Ansell, 2011: 23-24). As this program improved the economic and educational position of poor families, it targeted not only extremely poor families, but also moderately poor families. Together with the Bolsa Família, President Lula created an anti-poverty program called as Zero Hunger which sought to bring together initiatives in land reform, housing, health, nutrition, sanitation, education and other areas of development (Ansell, 2011: 25). Even though these cash-

transfer programs embodied neoliberal values, they succeeded in diminishing poverty and inequality. These programs eventually became popular and critically important for Brazil's poor majority.

The Landless Workers' Movement decided to accelerate land occupations in order to raise concern over the land problem due to the policies of Lula government. Mobilization and protest for land reform escalated, and occupations and other tactics grew in number all over the country (Tilly, Kennedy, & Ramos, 2010). MST launched national marches and a national day of struggle for fighting against neoliberal policies of the government and agribusiness (Ondetti, 2008: 212). The movement tried to gain widespread national support to reach an efficient agrarian reform while fighting against manipulative mass media and negative outcomes of government's decisions.

In response to increasing conflicts and to the actions of the movement, Lula and the PT demanded time to balance the slow pace of land reform and open negotiations with the MST (Santos R. , 2003: 138). Yet, the Lula government could neither carry out an effective agrarian policy that met the needs of the peasantry nor act in tandem with the MST. His promotion of large-scale agriculture and his rejection of a comprehensive agrarian reform caused disappointment among Lula's long-time supporters (NACLA Report, 2011: 12).

4.4. Recent Period: Dilma Rousseff (2011-present)

Dilma Rousseff became the President of Brazil in 2011 and just days after she was inaugurated; MST started its activities to ask the new president to speed up the rate of land redistribution to the landless people. The country's political context and existing policies of the government affect the movement and its strategies about agrarian question. MST seeks to change the old agrarian structures based on inequality, injustice and violence, and calls for an efficient land reform and

sustainable agricultural policies (Dangl, 2011). The movement aims to serve as a guide to the President Rousseff in the agrarian policies and believes that this close relationship would benefit social goals and environment. MST tries to reach an agrarian reform which respects the environment, develops diversified and small-scale farming, and diminishes the negative effects of foreign corporations and large estates (Dangl, 2011). It seeks to establish an important relationship with the government to be able to provide a viable model for Rousseff's policies.

“The essential elements of the Lula government have been maintained and reinforced with Rousseff (Sader, 2011: 31)”. She defends the continuation of the policies of her predecessor; therefore, the new government is unlikely to move away from Lula's policy road (Dangl, 2010). It was expected that Rousseff would carry on the Lula's policies in the area of land reform and agriculture as the close relationship with agribusiness is expected to carry on. Multinational agro-industrial corporations, which have been supported and have expanded their operations throughout the country during the Lula government, are assumed to preserve their ties with large landowners and the politicians (Dangl, 2010). In the same way, President Rousseff has continued social policies as central to the government's fundamental pillar (Sader, 2011: 32). She defines the main incentives behind her policy decisions as the continuity of the issues of social development and popular programs such as Zero Hunger and the Family Grant (Dangl, 2010).

However, the Rousseff government may follow MST's agrarian policies and create a crucial link with the movement. The movement claims that the cooperation between MST and the government will help to provide land to the small farmers and keep people in the countryside. This will prevent the rural exodus into the urban slums and reduce the unemployment in the cities. It will also solve the problems of overpopulation and rebalance the environment (Dangl, 2011). This cooperation and its possible positive results may present an

opportunity to the President Rousseff in order to eliminate the land problems and reach a sustainable agrarian reform in Brazil.

Yet, according to the MST, last period (the year 2013) has pointed negative outcomes for agrarian reform. There has not been any progress in agrarian reform policy, as MST asserted, the government walked back. The Rousseff administration got worse regarding land reform policies. Despite being a negative period in relation to agrarian reform, the movement remained steadfast in the struggle for land. The demonstrations, marches and occupations took place in the whole country (Friends of the MST Web site).

4.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, according to the Landless Workers' Movement, an efficient agrarian reform is based on "the organization of the people and a progressive government willing to work with the movement". MST also adds that it has made important progress in the organization, but has not encountered a government committed to the agrarian reform (Tilly, Kennedy, & Ramos, 2010). In any case, regardless of who is president, MST will maintain its struggle and actions until the government answers to their demands, and will continue its policy decisions in order to build a more equal and fraternal society.

The movement has always been interested in the politics and roadmap of the government about the land issue. It has emphasized that its participation in the politics, as in Gramscian terms, strengthens the objectives of mobilization in civil society. It has also tried to influence the political decisions related to the agrarian reform and also to landless and poor people. The MST has identified its organization strategies concerning the policies and decisions of government. Moreover, it has supported some politicians and political parties that are close to the movement's principles. The MST has had close relationship especially with

the Workers' Party of Brazil; yet, it has explicitly refused to become organically linked to the PT. It has always remained independent from political parties and has been prudent in its political actions. It has not aimed to seize the power; rather it has tried to change the world without taking power. It has presented alternative policies and has taken crucial steps towards its ultimate goals.

CHAPTER 5

FORMS OF STRUGGLE AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE MOVEMENT

The Landless Workers' Movement of Brazil is one of the largest and the most organized social movements of Latin America. MST calls for an efficient agrarian reform fighting against inequality and injustice in the society. In order to achieve its goals, the movement has established a remarkable organizational structure which encourages politicization and mobilization (Vergara-Camus, 2009: 181) as well as raising awareness in the society. MST organizes land occupations and other forms of struggle, besides it provides daily life activities on an equal basis in its encampments or settlements. The movement offers significant education and health care systems along with a functional communication network. It has also a successful agricultural production system based on cooperatives (Friends of the MST Web site). This organized social movement has taken crucial steps for its goals and it sustains its activities for the ideal of a fairer society.

MST has some significant capabilities making it more effective and powerful. The movement's mobilization strategy plays an important role for reaching its aims. MST has a broad membership system mobilizing masses of people through land occupations, marches and popular demonstrations (Carter, 2010: 198). It mobilizes different collective groups in a highly coordinated manner. The movement relies principally on volunteers and also takes some professional support. In addition, MST has multi-layered thematic teams dealing with the issues concerning education, health, finance, recruitment, communication, culture, youth, gender, production, ecology, human rights and international relations. The movement tries to find solutions to a wide range of problems by developing different methods depending on the agenda. It has a noticeable capacity for innovation and adaptation (Carter, 2010: 199). MST targets financial independence to secure the funding needed to sustain its activities. It has

diversified and decentralized much of its fundraising efforts, and also has cooperated with numerous partners from Brazilian civil society and international allies (Carter, 2010: 200). Another important point about the movement is its strong emphasis on education. MST has a strong educational system that raises consciousness among its members. It tries to ensure a well-composed and orderly lifestyle to its members. Furthermore, the movement engages in the political process through establishing dynamic relations with the political system. It aims to call public attention to its activities by the way of an organized, politicized, autonomous and non-violent form of social conflict (Carter, 2010: 202-203). MST provides a legitimate democratic instrument for social change through its well-organized structure and successful activities.

In this chapter, it is focused on the organizational structure of the movement and its forms of struggle. It starts by examining these forms of struggle which include land occupations, public meetings, marches, demonstrations, production activities and education system. Land occupations are the most important form of struggle for the MST. In addition to the land occupations, the movement organizes also public meetings, marches, demonstrations, petitions and so on. Besides this the chapter looks also into the sectors under the MST such as production, cooperatives and education. They can also be regarded as integral to their struggle as they are instrumental for the MST to reach its goals. Thereafter, in the last part of the chapter, the encampments and settlements of the movement are analyzed. Their internal structure is examined by highlighting its prominent points.

5.1. MST's Methods of Struggle

5.1.1. Land Occupations

For MST, the most efficient way to put pressure on the government has been land occupation. The land occupations have become a necessary reaction because of the lack of an agrarian reform. MST has decided to occupy *latifundia* as its

primary action for the land struggle (Fernandes, 2005: 317). Through these occupations, the movement has tried to oppose the landowners' political and economic power as well as put pressure on the government to implement an effective land reform. MST does preparatory works before occupation. The members of the movement organize the landless families in order to decide how to occupy the land. This joint decision-making process ensures the efficiency of the occupation and strengthens commitment of the members and families. Then the families with the support of the MST members carry out the occupation (Harnecker, 2003: 38-39). Considering its successful results, this organized manner makes the land occupations most discernible action of MST.

The agricultural development model implemented since the 1960s has engendered the intensification of land concentration and exclusion of many poor families. The struggles and resistance started against exploitation and exclusion. Besides, due to the lack of a comprehensive agrarian reform, the landless people have intensified the struggle through land occupations (Fernandes, 2005: 319). The process of occupation has involved the expropriation of the *latifundia*, the settlement of families, the production and reproduction of family labor, cooperation and creation of agricultural policies (Fernandes, 2005: 319).

The Landless Workers' Movement carries out its occupations on the basis of the Brazilian Constitution. The Constitution states that land not being used productively should be expropriated and distributed in an agrarian reform program (Branford & Rocha, 2003: 125). The Brazilian Constitution of 1988 requires land serve a social function which is performed when rural property meets the following requirements (Article 186) (Friends of the MST Web site):

- "Rational and adequate use",
- "Adequate use of available natural resources and preservation of the environment",

- “Compliance with the provisions which regulate labor relations”, and
- “Exploitation which favors the well-being of the owners and workers”.

Article 184 of the Constitution allows the expropriation of the rural property which is not performing its social function (Friends of the MST Web site):

“It is within the power of the Union to expropriate on account of social interest, for purposes of agrarian reform, the rural property which is not performing its social function, against prior and fair compensation in agrarian debt bonds with a clause providing for maintenance of the real value, redeemable within a period of up to twenty years computed as from the second year of issue, and the use of which shall be defined in the law.”



Picture 1: One of the MST’s land occupations

(Source: <http://www.waronwant.org/events/upcoming-events/16810-film-landless-farmers-and-the-biggest-march-in-brazilian-history>)

When the MST members find an unproductive land, they start the process of occupation. After the identification of the area to be occupied, the movement always takes into account that the land must be easily accessible for all organized families. The participation of the whole landless family in the occupation process

and their mobilization in a coordinated manner are definitely necessary for a successful occupation. The details of the process must be discussed with the whole group and the important points must be underlined (Harnecker, 2003: 40). The occupation starts, and the struggle of the landless families starts. The landless families frequently confront with the police, landowners and private security guards who try to expel them from occupied lands. MST's members do not carry firearm, they may only use their farm implements for self-defense (Ondetti, 2008: 115-116). During the occupation process, the landless farmers attempt to negotiate with the authorities and organize meetings with them. The occupations take a form of political pressure making the struggle visible. These landless families eventually win legal rights over the land and establish the settlements (Harnecker, 2003: 41-43).



Picture 2 : MST's members do not carry firearm, they only use their farm equipments for self-defense

(Source: <http://www.eco-action.org/dod/no7/88-96.html>)

The landless families make preparations, decide how to occupy land and carry out the occupation. Once the land is occupied, the families establish the camps. They

organize temporary housing and set up well-known black tents of the movement (Harnecker, 2003: 43). These camps are important starting points of the MST's organizational process. Through these encampments, the movement puts pressure on the authorities as well as makes people aware of the importance of struggle for the land. MST also educates the occupant families to keep them mobilized in this struggle (Harnecker, 2003: 43). The movement regards winning land as well as the struggle to remain on the land, so it seeks to create autonomous spaces for landless families to organize and educate them against exclusionary power structures (Vergara-Camus, 2009: 182). The participation of everyone in decision-making process, democracy, division of tasks and collective leadership are guiding principles in the encampments of MST (Harnecker, 2003: 45). In an encampment, the decisions are taken by all members in consultation and coordination with regional, state and national leaders. The negotiations, decisions and actions constitute a process of politicization and empowerment. By solving their problems and planning the struggle, the families of the MST learn to mobilize and organize (Vergara-Camus, 2009: 182). They set up a collective life and each member assumes a role contributing to the collective work. The movement resists expulsions, and tries to remain on the occupied land with a peaceful struggle.



Picture 3 : MST sets up its well-known black tents after occupation

(Source: <http://www.zedudu.com.br/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Acampamento-MST.jpg>)

Land occupations are the most efficient way of MST's struggle for both land and land reform. Through the occupations, the movement organizes and mobilizes the landless families as well as makes the struggle more visible in the society. MST underlines that it does not invade land, but occupies it. The occupations aim to fill an empty space that means lands do not comply with their social function; they are not act of force to take lands from someone (Harnecker, 2003: 43). The Brazilian government and media use "invasions" instead of land occupations, but MST insists the negative impact of "invasion" and defends that it occupies lands in a legitimate way (Harnecker, 2003: 43). The occupations as direct action of the movement lead to strengthen the rural workers and their struggle to achieve a comprehensive agrarian reform.



Picture 4: An encampment of the MST (MST Agrarian Reform: For Social Justice and Popular Sovereignty)

(Source: <http://www.brasildefato.com.br/node/10966>)

The Gramscian analysis highlights the importance of the land occupations of MST. By way of land occupations, MST transforms a piece of land into a position for its actions. The occupied land becomes the field of the movement's struggle. The occupation process is a practice of the war of position creating alternative policies and alternative ways of life. Through these occupations, the movement reconstructs the social relations and develops new programs for landless families. Thus, the MST builds a practice of counter-hegemony that resists existing

situation and presents alternative policies compatible with its ultimate goals. The occupations increase the visibility of the movement and strengthen its organizational capacity. Land occupations are also a way of questioning existing policies of the government and raising awareness about land problem of the country.

5.1.2. Other Forms of Struggle

5.1.2.1. Demonstrations, Marches and Meetings

The Landless Workers' Movement carries out other forms of struggle in addition to the land occupations. MST mobilizes the landless people through organizing demonstrations, public meetings, marches, petitions, hunger strikes, election campaigns, protest camps, and acts of civil disobedience such as sit-ins, building takeovers, and road blockades (Carter, 2010: 203). The movement tries to bring visibility to the related issues, arouse interest and put pressure on the authorities with these struggles (Harnecker, 2003: 47). These non-violent struggles of the movement symbolize its will to resist and aim to achieve an efficient agrarian reform.



Picture 5: A Demonstration for Agrarian Reform

(Source: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/00/MST_06142007.jpg)

There are different forms of struggle together with the land occupations. MST organizes public meetings with the authorities in its encampments and settlements. With these meetings landless people express their intentions and demands along with sharing their ideas related to the issues raised (Harnecker, 2003: 47). The movement also put the landless families together and forms marches to shake the public opinion. These marches draw the attention of the media and the society on the land issue, and maintain dialogue with the society through the media. They also put pressure on the politicians and open the way for negotiation with the state (Plummer D. M., 2008: 36). In 1997, MST organized a national march led by 1300 people and 64 days. That march to Brasilia was supported by the society and “allowed the MST to gain widespread recognition as Brazil’s principal social movement” (Carter, 2010: 195-196). The march received intense media coverage and recognized the MST as a force fighting for land and land reform (Ondetti, 2008: 161). Besides, the movement promoted a large and sophisticated march to Brasilia in 2005. The march was led by 12.000 people and supported with comprehensive logistical apparatus including massive tents, transport vehicles, child-care center, health workers, cooking staff and a mobile radio station (Carter, 2010: 198). This crucial march for agrarian reform was an important point in the movement’s struggle.



Picture 6 : “National March for Agrarian Reform”

(Source: <http://newint.org/features/special/2009/12/01/we-are-millions/>)

Furthermore, MST sometimes uses the struggles like hunger strikes, occupation of public buildings and acts of civil disobedience when the movement wants answers from the representatives of the government and exerts pressure for land reform (Harnecker, 2003: 48). Because the use of violence is not favored by the landless movement, these struggles are nonviolent resistance providing legitimate democratic vehicle for social change (Carter, 2010: 203). They are forms of political protest intensifying the struggles and relations with the authorities as well as increasing the power and pressure of the landless people (Fernandes, 2005: 330). MST combines various forms of struggle with the land occupations in order to achieve its goals, put pressure on the authorities, and raise awareness about the land issue.



Picture 7 : One of the important marches of MST

(Source: <http://racismoambiental.net.br/tag/assentamentos/>)

The NSM theory and Gramscian analysis emphasize these forms of struggle. The new social movement theory recognizes these non-violent struggles to be able to improve social conditions and life standards. Through these forms of struggle, the movement mobilizes landless people, increases consciousness about land problem and puts pressure on the government. These struggles are also significant for the Gramscian approach in which they resist against the hegemonic power and aim to strengthen the subaltern groups. The land issue remains on the agenda through these activities which aim to shake public opinion and put pressure on the authorities. These activities strengthen the counter-hegemonic struggle of the movement. They also refer the class structure of the movement. They include struggle against the dominant production relations and against capitalist system. The class consciousness and opposition have been reinforced and the movement has made significant progress in line with its goals.

5.1.2.2. Production and Cooperatives

MST puts a special emphasis on its autonomy not to become too dependent on external resources and aid; so financial independence is very important for the movement (Carter, 2010: 200). It seeks self-financing as much as possible. MST gets regular contributions from its members and cooperatives. “Each family in the settlements contributes 1 % of its yearly production for the MST. Each settlement also contributes to the movement due to the economic situation and existing conditions.” (Harnecker, 2003: 121). Besides, MST receives contributions from massive campaigns, local official resources, civil society groups and international allies. These resources are transferred to the organization, infrastructure and activities of the movement (Harnecker, 2003: 121-122). MST implements its economic and financial plans carefully putting particular emphasis on the self-financing as well as agricultural production and cooperatives.

The Landless Workers' Movement has developed new collective forms of production, formed different cooperatives and created agro-industries. MST promotes collective working and cooperation in the production and builds up new ways of production that oppose the dominant production model and nature-society relations (Harnecker, 2003: 76-77). It aims to improve collaboration and coordination among its members and strengthen their relationship with land and environment. The movement also receives support from technical experts about production to be able to develop ecologic ways of production (Harnecker, 2003: 77). The production system of the movement and cooperation among its members reinforce the self-sufficiency of the MST preserving its autonomy. It strengthens solidarity among members as well as increases commitment to the movement raising political and social awareness among them (Harnecker, 2003: 79-82).



Picture 8: Agricultural production in the settlements of MST

(Source: <http://racismoambiental.net.br/2013/12/28/>)

The existing agricultural production system and imported technologies applied in this system have been refused by the landless movement. MST opposes the agro-export model which is dependent on foreign capital and technology, and monoculture that deteriorates the land and environment (Robles, 2001: 155). The movement tries to change the existing technological pattern based on chemical and genetic products. The imported technologies, as MST argues, are not suitable

for Brazil's climate, soil and agricultural properties damaging the traditional practices of the Brazilian rural people (Harnecker, 2003: 77-78). The existing agricultural policies expand the agribusiness enterprises with its negative effects on small and medium-scale farmers. MST favors alternative technologies and new ways of production to be an example for small farmers (Robles, 2001: 155-156). Because the Landless Movement thinks that monoculture causes the loss of biodiversity, it rejects the practices of monoculture and seeks to diversify agriculture. It produces different crops adequate for the natural conditions preserving the land and environment (Harnecker, 2003: 78).

In addition, MST has created agricultural cooperatives, trade, marketing and service cooperatives, credit cooperatives, and cooperatives for technical assistance (Friends of the MST Web site). These cooperatives present cooperation in production, and bring economic, social and political advantages to the members. They encourage social solidarity and the common good benefiting the rural workers (Robles, 2001: 156). Agricultural cooperatives create alternative ways of employment and income to these rural workers. They also provide employment for young people in rural areas and economic and social benefits in the settlements (Robles, 2001: 155-157). They support cooperation, active participation of all members, a strong sense of community and new social relations. Moreover, MST has formed trade and service cooperatives in order to sell the products along with organize the marketing process, inputs and consumer goods. These cooperatives also help planning process, and give trainings and technical assistance (Harnecker, 2003: 82-83). In addition to the agricultural and trade cooperatives, there are credit cooperatives which bring together settlers who apply for loans as a group, give credits and use savings of the settlers (Harnecker, 2003: 83-85).

MST seeks to restructure the existing agrarian production and change the nature-society relation in Brazil. The new ways of agricultural production and different cooperatives of the movement help to reduce the negative effects of the market,

and so MST presents an alternative world in its settlements. These developments strengthen the organizational structure of the movement. MST, as a counter-hegemonic movement, resists the dominant model while it develops alternative forms of production and alternative understanding of nature-society relations.

5.1.2.3. Education as a Method of Struggle

Education is a form of struggle and has a crucial place for the Landless Workers' Movement that has emphasized the motto of "All landless, men and women must study" (Friends of the MST Web site). The MST has put a strong emphasis on providing education and training to its members and raising awareness about the existing situation and the goals of the movement. It has set up a well-developed system of schools, training programs and workshops which support participation, self-confidence and social responsibility among its members (Carter, 2010: 201). The movement has established pre-school centers, public schools, training courses and libraries that implement its educational guidelines and policies. The education system of MST increases political and social consciousness of its members as well as encourages collective decision-making, group works, planning and effective participation (Friends of the MST Web site). MST has determined its top priority as education, and has created its own schools and training courses and carried out various educational activities. The movement seeks to ensure its continuity and transform the society via education (Martins, 2006: 271-272). The education system of the movement, on the basis of Gramscian approach, struggles against the existing system in Brazil and creates an alternative hegemony. This large and developed system of education is related to the ultimate aims of the movement and leads to create the new man and the new woman along with change the society without taking power.

The educational system of MST accompanies the trajectory of the movement becoming an essential part of the dynamics of its struggle. The experiences of the

movement have developed the educational process promoting cooperation and participation in the schools and trainings. Social transformation, humanistic and socialist values, and lifelong process of learning are supported in the MST's education system (Stubrin, 2008: 29-30). The landless movement has some vital educational principles that are based on an alternative pedagogy. According to these principles, the realities and existing situation should be taught. The schools must establish a strong relationship between theory and practice, and make a methodological combination between education and training processes (Stubrin, 2008: 30). They must teach how to analyze the reality and include a 'work-and-study' methodology (Martins, 2006: 272). There should be also links between educational process and political and economic processes. Furthermore, teachers and students work together as well as learn and teach each other. There must be no hierarchical relationship between them (Harnecker, 2003: 93-94). Teachers encourage student participation preparing them for living, working and learning collectively. These close relationships promote solidarity, responsibility and comradeship among the members. The participatory democratic structure of the schools strengthens the movement and its activities for reaching its goals (McCowan, 2003: 137-139). The system of MST helps the combination of individual and collective learning processes as well as promotes the research ability and self-organization of the young people (Stubrin, 2008: 30). These educational principles have the aim of forming a new society and a new world with alternative conceptions.

In addition, the educational experiences of MST have influenced by Paulo Freire's ideas on education and pedagogy. The pedagogy of Freire is based on the combination of theory and practice, non-hierarchical relationship between teachers and students, mutual and collective learning and problem-solving, and cooperation and participation (Stubrin, 2008: 23; McCowan, 2003: 141-142). The interaction between theoretical information and daily practices with its importance in the education system takes a crucial place in Freire's ideas. According to him,

“Nobody educates anybody, nobody educates himself, people educate themselves mutually, through their collective organization (Harnecker, 2003: 97)”. The MST, therefore, gives importance to the ‘work-and-study’ method which combines theory and practice. Besides, in the MST’s schools, as Freire stated, student participation is vigorously encouraged. They are not passive and powerless, and are in close relationship with their teachers (Harnecker, 2003: 94-95). In line with the ideas of Freire, MST aims to develop the members through education, create positive changes and transform the society. Furthermore, the education system of MST is in accordance with Gramsci’s ideas on the importance of education and the role of schools in creating alternative hegemony. According to Gramsci, educational relationships build the essence of hegemony and are important for changing the people and society. These educational relationships should be active and reciprocal. Gramsci also underlined the importance of the intellectuals to transform the society and their role in the context of creating counter-hegemony (Karriem, 2009: 320-323). Therefore, the MST has put a significant emphasis on education, forming intellectuals and establishing its own schools and training centers.

MST organizes national training programs, national seminars, technical courses, and training programs for educators, political training courses for leaders, conferences and meetings. It has established a lot of public schools in its encampments and settlements throughout Brazil. It has also carried out literacy projects through the partnership with public universities. The movement has created pre-school centers and has developed itinerant schools for camps (Friends of the MST Web site; Harnecker, 2003: 98-101). Besides, it constituted the Technical Institute for Training and Research on Agrarian Reform (*Instituto Técnico de Capacitação e Pesquisa da Reforma Agrária- ITERRA*) in order to organize educational and research activities. The institute combines theory and practice providing an atmosphere similar to the daily life (Harnecker, 2003: 99). Another crucial educational experience is ‘Florestan Fernandes National School’

(*Escola Nacional Florestan Fernandes- ENFF*) which was created for “developing and organizing political and ideological training for MST’s leaders and activists as well as for the working class” (Friends of the MST Web site). The school educates and trains its members and working class from around the world as well as gives basic knowledge about the MST and its history, Brazilian political history, land struggles, economy, philosophy and sociology (Harnecker, 2003: 100). This school provides intensive courses, programs, trainings and activities; and serves an important example of the movement’s education system.

The education has a significant place in MST’s organizational structure, policies and strategies. The movement possesses a large and highly developed educational system which includes public schools, training courses, national seminars, conferences and meetings. The education system promotes participation and cooperation, and strengthens solidarity, social justice and autonomy. It increases awareness of the people reinforcing the movement. Through its education system, MST resists the existing situation and dominant model, and presents an alternative world; and most importantly it takes considerable steps to transform the society with combining theory and practice.

5.2. Settlements of the MST and Organizational Structure

Once the land conquered and its property made legal, as a result of a generally quite long struggle, the landless people settle on the lands assigned them. These agricultural communities are called “settlements” (Harnecker, 2003: 53). The settlements of the movement are made up of a group of families that work for landless workers and use the land for agricultural production. In the settlements, there is a collective way of life that includes different activities from basic food production to the educational and health services. Besides, it is important to note that an educational method of work-and-study, an explicit respect for a diversity of opinions and a persistent confrontation with the neoliberal policies exist in the

settlements (Martins, 2006: 276). The organization and decision-making is completely democratic, and the leadership is decentralized and collective. Each MST settlement determines its own path interpreting the guidelines of the movement according to its own situation. They provide a collective living and working, and always struggle for agrarian reform in Brazil (Harnecker, 2003: 53).



Picture 9: A Settlement for 108 Families

(Source: <http://noahmst2011.blogspot.com.tr/>)

The movement is organized with collective units from the grassroots level to the state and national bodies. The basic organizational units of the MST are family groups, known as '*Núcleo de Base*' in Portuguese (Harnecker, 2003: 116-117). They address the issues met by the member families and elect two representatives, one man and one woman, to represent them in the meetings. These representatives attend regional meetings and elect regional representatives. Then, they form State Coordinating Body of the MST and National Coordinating Body of the MST. The National Directorate deals with the day-to-day management with strategic thinking and planning. National Coordination, composed of two representatives from each state, is charged with broad policy decisions (Ondetti, 2008: 116). The MST presents an example of participatory democracy from its settlements to the national bodies, and its organizational structure functions in a decentralized and cohesive manner.

The MST has no formal leadership mechanism; all members have the same rights and power, and everything is decided by a majority vote (Harnecker, 2003: 113). MST's leaders have permanent ties to the rural poor as well as have loyalties primarily to the movement. They are relatively well educated; moreover they continue their education and develop themselves in order to make contributions to the movement and land struggle. Through continuing actions and practical experiences, the leaders develop their capacities to organize and attract new supporters (Veltmeyer & Petras, 2002: 79-96). They are not dependent on electoral politicians, tend to be self-reliant and try to bring change with their direct actions. They always analyze the general situation and observe the structures of power. The leaders are in opposition to the neoliberal policies and impact of the international financial institutions. They defend alternative social system, provide guidelines to action and motivate the organization (Veltmeyer & Petras, 2002: 79-96). The leaders work for the movement and land struggle, together with mobilize, educate and politicize the landless people.

In addition, MST gives importance on the division of tasks; it tries to allocate the tasks among all members at any organizational level. By doing so, every member participates in the daily works with a specific role working in a collective manner (Harnecker, 2003: 113). Thus, the movement can avoid the centralization of power and operational problems. MST also puts emphasis on the discipline and training of the cadres. It believes that the internal discipline and respect for the collective decision-making strengthen the movement and its steps for the land reform. Moreover, it is stressed that cadres of the movement must have scientific knowledge; they should learn from the experience of Brazil in land struggle and political developments. The movement attempts to provide "a broad and not dogmatic theoretical formation to its cadres" (Harnecker, 2003: 113-115). It also seeks to establish a strong relationship between its leaders and the base, and plan its activities in detail. These important principles make the movement more organized and powerful, and support its activities in the land struggle.

Gender equality and youth participation have also crucial place for MST as the movement aims to transform the society into a more just and equal one. MST puts emphasis on the need to terminate inequality in gender relations and encourages the women's active participation in its activities and decision-making processes (Harnecker, 2003: 112). The movement supports equal participation by women in its all education and training courses and in the organizational structure. It ensures one male and one female coordinator in the community bases and encourages the participation of women in the whole production process and daily works (Friends of the MST Web site). MST tries to prevent discrimination and exploitation, and so build a new way of society. Moreover, the young people and children have essential place in the movement. The MST puts particular emphasis on the development and education of the children and thus it carries out training programs and specific courses for young people, organizes seminars, and encourages their political education (Friends of the MST Web site). Hence, the movement strengthens its organizational structure and cooperation among its members.

The Landless Workers' Movement also considers its cultural activities and communication skills essential. MST has substantial cultural values supporting its cultural identity. MST presents music, dance and poetry at demonstrations, marches and occupations (Friends of the MST Web site). It tries to carry out various cultural activities as well as organizes festivals, music and theatre groups and workshops (Harnecker, 2003: 75). It establishes networking relationships between its members and intellectuals. Besides, the movement develops a rich symbolic repertoire with its flag, anthem, chants, songs and poetry (Carter, 2010: 202). These cultural elements reinforce the movement's organizational capabilities, and cooperation and solidarity among its members. Furthermore, the communication plays an important role for the movement. The MST has developed a communication network to share its perspectives, decisions and voices of the members. It has newspaper, magazine, radio and website that give

information and news about the movement (Friends of the MST Web site). These networks serve to a direct flow of communication between member families and coordinators to prevent miscommunication.

The struggle for land as well as internal structure in the camps or settlements and organizational form of the movement create an alternative for landless families. MST seeks to give meaning to the struggle of the landless people as a subaltern group promoting a practice of counter-hegemony as Gramsci stated. The Landless Workers' Movement as an effective social movement aims to show that 'another world is possible', and attempts to present this alternative world in its settlements and activities (Vergara-Camus, 2009: 179; Santos & Rodríguez-Garavito, 2005: 2). Through its struggle and efficient organizational structure, MST aims to empower the landless people and transform the society.

5.3. Conclusion

MST fights for land and land reform and also strives to remain on the land. It resists the existing economic, political and social conditions; so it uses different forms of struggle in order to achieve its ultimate objectives. Land occupations are the most influential strategy of the MST, and through occupations, it successfully organizes and mobilizes landless people. The movement has also used different ways of struggle like demonstrations, marches, public meetings and acts of civil disobedience. These activities increase consciousness on the land issue and pressure the authorities about this process.

In addition, the struggle of MST has other important components in order to achieve its ultimate goals. It has a successful agricultural production system and different cooperatives. Through this own agricultural production system, the MST has tried to diminish negative influence of the market and build an alternative system in its settlements. Moreover, the movement has a well-developed

education system which seeks to transform the society with combining theory and practice. Its system fosters participation and cooperation among its members, and raises awareness of the people regarding land and land reform issues.

The movement has remarkably progressed with these practices and has strengthened as a counter-hegemonic actor. It has presented an alternative world, and proceeded step by step to transform the existing system. On the basis of the Gramscian approach, through its activities and organizational structure, MST has attempted to change the nature-society relations to reach a more just society. It provides an effective organizational structure which promotes counter-hegemonic practices. The movement uses the war of position, therefore it creates alternative forms of production and alternative policies which lead significant social changes and strengthen the landless people.

CHAPTER6

CONCLUSION

In this study, it is argued that Landless Workers' Movement is one of the most organized, dynamic and effective social movements which fights for land and land reform in Brazil. The movement was born in consequence of capitalist restructuring of agriculture, land concentration, exploitation and expulsion of rural people from their lands. The MST is a significant part of land struggle in Brazil and Latin America. It mobilizes landless people by employing different methods of struggle in order to achieve a comprehensive land reform and ensure more equitable life standards to its members.

This study aims to analyze the Landless Rural Workers' Movement through different theoretical approaches that highlight divergent crucial points. The movement is firstly evaluated from new social movement theory. Various scholars analyze new social movements focusing on different crucial issues. It is generally assumed that NSMs are primarily based on social and cultural matters. They put emphasis on social mobilization, cultural realization and quality of life standards. Similarly, the MST deals with the social and cultural matters, and aims to increase the quality of life of its members and change their consciousness. Although it emphasizes social and cultural issues, it also focuses on economic and political issues. It must be underlined that political and economic concerns of the MST cannot be ignored. The movement emerged because of social and economic inequalities in rural areas. It has been always interested in economic and political matters which affect rural workers and their situation. Moreover, similar to the NSMs, the MST pays attention to preserve its autonomy and avoid becoming a part of political parties and organizations. It uses non-violent mobilization tactics in order to resist the inequalities and regain power over their own lives. Although MST has some similar features to new social movement theory, the movement has also diverging features from NSMs. At this point, it is important to underline the

“political version” of new social movement theory which is argued by Buechler (Buechler, 1995: 457-458). According to Buechler, this perspective recognizes the potential of new social movements for progressive change if allied with working-class movements. It analyzes the social base of new social movements in class terms. It is significant to evaluate the MST from this perspective: the movement raises strategic questions and takes instrumental actions for its ultimate goals. It organizes activities and mobilizes its members. It underlines the appropriate alliances and coalitions with other class-based movements and organizations. It strives for radical changes through its decisions and activities. This distinction made by Buechler might be meaningful for underlining economic and political concerns of the MST.

The landless movement is also evaluated from the viewpoint of Mariátegui. He points out the agrarian problems and developed a Marxist approach analyzing the forces for revolution. He argues (Vanden, 1978: 203) that workers and peasants are the revolutionary forces together. A link between structural changes in the agrarian society and the rural struggles is established by Mariátegui, so he defends the rural uprisings and underlines the importance of rural organizations and movements. The MST is seen as a revolutionary force which aims to transform the society and existing situation of the country. It struggles against the structural problems of the country and strives for establishing a new order for landless families. These important thoughts of Mariátegui show that the MST remained not only a peasant movement but also gained a class character during its struggle.

In addition, the Gramscian approach enables us to analyze the MST and its policies. The MST is seen as a counter-hegemonic movement which opposes the hegemonic power and aims to create an alternative hegemony in the society. As a counter-hegemonic actor, the MST resists the dominant regime and tries to strengthen the rural workers. The movement stresses the importance of intellectuals regarding its struggle against the existing situation of the country and

subaltern position of the rural workers. The intellectuals develop alternative policies and promote social change for subaltern groups in the society. The MST puts a special emphasis on the intellectuals and always tries to strengthen its educational system. Moreover, the Landless Movement's strategies are very reminiscent of what Gramsci calls method of war of position which is a process of creating alternative policies in order to change the existing social and economic structures. The struggle forms of the MST have the characteristics of the war of position; for instance, the education system of the movement is a war of position. The movement's education system is a counter-hegemonic attempt to develop alternative policies, reconstruct social relations and change the existing structure of the society. In addition to the education system, the movement opposes the dominant system and offers an alternative way of life for landless families through its land occupations. Furthermore, the MST deals with the political matters and the policies of the existing governments. The movement shapes its activities and organizational strategies in accordance with these political developments. All these important points show that the MST strives for developing alternative counter-hegemonic policies and strengthening the landless people.

It is also important to highlight the class dynamics of the Landless Workers' Movement. The movement identifies itself as a class-based movement regarding its characteristics, organizational structure, goals and activities. In order to emphasize these dynamics, the class analysis should be based on the relationships, processes and experiences. Class is both economic and political concept, and more than a set of categories. E. M. Wood argues (Wood, 2001: 61-62) that the significant point about class analysis is not structural position of the class, rather the consequences of exploitative production relations and the process of class consciousness. The analysis of class as a relationship and process involves qualitative social fractions, struggles, common experiences and consciousness. In addition, Henry Bernstein emphasizes (Bernstein, 2010a: 92) that class dynamics are considered without the formation of observable sociological classes. He argues

that class is based in social relations of production and its relations with another class. He claims that transition to the capitalist agriculture led to transformation of agricultural production and thus the commodification of land and labor power. Social differentiation of rural labor and dispossession existed because of these capitalist social relations (Bernstein, 2010a: 81-87). Rural workers are considered a class by virtue of their relations with capital, as exploited by capital in some sense. Social movements and their struggles have their own class dynamics, consequences and effects.

The Landless Workers' Movement has an oppositional class character. Its historical development, organizational structure, activities and experiences underline its class dynamics. Its members are exploited and subordinated by the capitalist system. The system has created conflicts and struggles. Therefore, the movement occupies unused lands and organizes settlements on these lands. It has a discourse of class aiming to unite all its members. The experiences of the MST led to raise class consciousness among its members and strengthen its activities for their ultimate goals. Its internal structure also shows the movement's class dynamics. It has a well-organized and egalitarian internal structure. All members have equal rights and take active role in decision-making processes. The movement has a systematic organizational framework in its settlements that helps to develop alternative methods to bring social changes.

So as to understand the development of the MST, it is important to analyze the historical roots of the movement. The Landless Movement was born as a result of land concentration, existence of large idle lands and large numbers of landless workers. Brazil has had a land question throughout of its history. Land distribution has been inequitable and problematic in the country since its colonial times. The Land Law of 1850 made purchase the only way to acquire land and privatize possession. It restrained rural families' access to land. The private ownerships intensified land concentration and thus land struggles started to appear

in that period. Peasant Leagues were significant attempts of the land struggle in these early stages of the land problem. They were voluntary organizations that organized several meetings for an efficient land reform. They also resisted large landowners and occupied land for poor landless families. In 1954, the Union of Farmers and Agricultural Workers was established in order to coordinate various agricultural associations (Caldeira, 2008: 135). It underlined the importance of a political alliance between workers and peasants as Mariátegui argued. Moreover, another important attempt in these earlier times of the country was Landless Farmers' Movement which was established at the end of the 1950s. It resisted the eviction of rural families from their lands and struggled for conquering a plot of land.

During the dictatorship period between 1964 and 1978, social and economic inequalities in rural areas became more severe and land struggle was intensified. The military started the repression of all rural movements and aimed to destroy all rural activists. It focused on the agrarian problem by redistributing land through modernization of agricultural production. Large-scale production was favored in this period and small-scale and family farming influenced negatively. During the economic miracle period of 1968-1974, rural poor people were affected from this painful modernization. It had devastating social effects on rural people. In early 1980s, the struggles for an efficient land reform started in rural areas. The capitalist modernization and agricultural restructuring increased land concentration and rural outmigration, and raised social tension and land struggles. This process led to the emergence of the Landless Workers' Movement in 1984.

The MST has fought against social and economic inequalities in rural areas and has struggled for land and land reform since its foundation. The movement has always been in a close relationship with political issues and political context of the country. It has updated its strategies with respect to the policies of governments. It has always participated in the politics without transforming itself into a political

party or becoming organically linked to a political party. It has explicitly maintained its autonomy. The MST participates in the political matters and accordingly determines its mobilization strategies and organizational policies.

By the end of 1984, the MST was broadly organized in the southern part of Brazil. Then, it started to expand to other regions of the country. The movement held its First Congress in 1985 after the election of Tancredo Neves that put an end to the military dictatorship and opened a new political period. In the Congress, the members of the movement decided that occupation was the only solution for land and land reform. The occupations started to take place throughout the country. In the second half of the 1980s, the movement organized national meetings to consolidate itself. For this purpose, it improved the organizational structure of the settlements. Along with the land occupations and efforts in the settlements, it also emphasized the importance of political struggle to put pressure on the government about an efficient agrarian reform. During the period of President Collor de Mello, the MST faced with harsh political repression. Its occupations and other activities declined relatively. Thereafter, the government of Itamar Franco lowered the level of repression towards social movements and negotiated with the MST. During the period between 1985 and 1994, the MST continued to grow and its opposition to negative political decisions did not fall sharply even during the Collor period.

The landless movement faced different approaches during the two terms of Cardoso government. In the first term (1995-1999), the government focused on the elimination of land problem and followed a policy of extensive settlements. Land struggle grew intensely and the occupation activities increased all over the country. The government attempted to implement an agrarian reform program and allowed extensive settlements. President Cardoso tried to consolidate stability through market-oriented structural reforms. He followed neoliberal policies and a market-led land reform program. Due to these policies of Cardoso government, agricultural producers faced severe difficulties. The movement intensified its

occupation activities and pressure towards the government. It organized marches, demonstrations and public meetings to raise awareness about these negative outcomes of the government's policies. In the second term of Cardoso government, the government changed its stance to the land issue. The movement went through a period of decline between the years of 2000 and 2002. The number of occupations decreased and mobilization capacity of the movement weakened. The government criminalized the land occupations and restricted the support for the movement's activities. The government's commitment to agrarian reform worsened. Despite the decrease in the number of land occupations, the MST intensified the rural struggle and took an offensive stance towards government's policy decisions.

After the period of Cardoso government, Lula da Silva Brazil's Workers' Party came to the presidency in 2003. Despite positive expectations about this new government, the Lula government could not implement an efficient agrarian reform. Agrarian reform was subordinated to the economic objectives and excluded its political content. In the beginning period of the new government, the MST ceased all direct enforcement actions with the expectation of cooperation. But, the government failed to make progress about agrarian problem. The limited commitment to land reform and slow pace of land distribution raised questions among landless people. The government could not meet the demands of the MST regarding the agricultural policies. In contrast to the general framework of his party, President Lula followed a neoliberal economic program. The government did not take important decisions about land reform, so land redistribution stagnated in this period. Although the government increased the grants to the landless and poor people, these supports remained insufficient and inefficient. The government also established a close relationship with the agribusiness companies. The activities of rural farming declined and land concentration increased accordingly. These policy decisions raised questions and revealed disappointment

about the policies of President Lula. The MST decided to accelerate its land occupations and other activities in order to put pressure on the government.

When President Rousseff came to the presidency in 2011, a new period opened for the landless movement. The MST resumed its activities to demand President Rousseff speed up the rate of land redistribution to the landless people. This new government claimed to defend the continuation of the policies of Lula government. According to the MST, there has not been any progress in agrarian reform policy. The movement asserted that Rousseff government has got worse regarding land reform policies. The MST remains steadfast in the struggle for land. The demonstrations, marches and occupations have been taken organized through the country.

In addition, the Landless Workers' Movement with its developed organizational structure has adopted efficient forms of struggle. The MST has organized land occupations, marches, demonstrations, public meetings and civil disobedience actions. The movement also appears to be determined to continue its struggle in the encampments and settlements. It has its own production system and cooperatives. The MST also possesses an influential education system that is an important part of its struggle. All these forms of struggle strengthen the movement's capability in order to reach its ultimate goals. The movement's struggle against land problem, social and economic inequalities and negative policy decisions of the existing government has the characteristics of the war of position. Through these forms of struggle, the MST seeks to establish alternative policies in order to provide a more equitable life to its members.

Land occupations are the most influential strategy of the MST, and through occupations, it successfully organizes and mobilizes landless people. The occupations also make the MST's struggle more visible in the society and increase the awareness about land problem. Through these land occupations, the movement

opposes the social and economic inequalities and strengthens the landless people. It provides land and also a new way of life to the landless families. It establishes encampments and settlements and sets up a collective life. The families learn to mobilize and organize for their rights. By means of land occupations, the MST opposes the hegemonic power and rises as a counter-hegemonic power. The movement organizes land occupations as a war of position. It establishes its own system in the settlements and gives its members more equitable opportunities. During these land occupations as a form of struggle, the MST increases awareness and experience among its members. Hence, it is argued that the occupations underline the class dynamics of the MST.

The movement has also used different ways of struggle like demonstrations, marches, public meetings and acts of civil disobedience. These activities increase consciousness on the land issue and pressure the authorities about this process. The movement organizes public meetings in which landless people express their demands and opinions, and organizes marches to shake the public opinion about land problem. The movement also holds demonstrations and organizes civil disobedience actions. All of these struggles are non-violent that provide legitimate democratic environment to share opinions.

In addition, the MST has other important struggle forms in order to achieve its ultimate goals. It has a successful agricultural production system and different cooperatives. The movement aims to diminish negative effects of the market and build an alternative system in its settlements through its own agricultural production system. Moreover, the movement has a well-developed education system which seeks to transform the society with combining theory and practice. Its system fosters participation and cooperation among its members, and raises awareness of the people regarding land and land reform issues.

In this study, it is aimed to show that the Landless Rural Workers' Movement of Brazil has brought the class issue back in the social movements. Through its forms of struggle and organizational structure, the MST has gained class character and it has become different from many other social movements. The exploitation and inequalities inherent in the capitalist system caused differentiation and oppression for Brazilian rural workers. They met with social and economic problems. The processes of commodification and their consequences led to resistance and struggle among these rural people. These common experiences increased the consciousness and paved the way for collective action. These processes emphasize class dynamics of the MST. Its forms of struggle and internal structure of the settlements strengthen the class relations and action. Many other social movements have not highlighted their class characters as much as the MST.

The MST offers an alternative world in its settlements and maintains its struggle to transform the dominant system. Through its activities and organizational structure, MST strives for changing the nature-society relations to reach a more equal society. The Landless Rural Workers' Movement of Brazil celebrates its thirtieth anniversary this year. It has achieved a lot of successful gains in these years. It has more than 900 settlements with 150 thousand families in 23 states of Brazil. It has carried out more than 2.5 thousand occupations and set up 2 thousand schools in its settlements. It has gained credits for production and maintained its production system (Friends of the MST Web site). Despite all these gains, the movement still needs to have more successful attempts. The country does not have an efficient agrarian reform. Agribusiness adopted by capitalism continues to exploit the agriculture and destroy the rural workers. Large landowners, transnational companies and the bourgeois media promote the agribusiness model and discourage social struggle in the countryside. The government does not take effective actions for landless families and an agrarian

reform. For these reasons, the MST will continue its struggle for land, land reform and also a more equal society.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: TURKISH SUMMARY

Bu çalışmada, Topraksız Kır İşçileri Hareketi'nin (MST) Brezilya'da toprak ve toprak reformu için mücadele veren en örgütlü, dinamik ve etkili toplumsal hareketlerden biri olduğu ileri sürülmektedir. Topraksızlar Hareketi, tarımın kapitalizm ile yeniden yapılandırılması ve bunun sonucunda ortaya çıkan sömürü ve kırsal halkın kendi topraklarından sürülmesi sonucu doğmuştur. MST, Brezilya ve Latin Amerika'da toprak için verilen mücadelenin çok önemli bir parçasıdır. Hareket, kapsamlı bir toprak reformu gerçekleştirmek ve üyelerine daha adil yaşam standartları sağlamak için farklı mücadele yöntemleri ile topraksız insanları harekete geçirir.

Bu çalışma, Topraksız Kır İşçileri Hareketi'ni farklı teorik yaklaşımlar ile analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Hareket, öncelikle yeni toplumsal hareketler teorisi ile değerlendirilmiştir. Yeni toplumsal hareketler, sosyal ve kültürel konuları öncelikli olarak ele alan ve yaşam standartlarının kalitesine vurgu yapan hareketlerdir. Benzer şekilde, MST de sosyal ve kültürel konular ile ilgilenmekte ve üyelerinin yaşam kalitesini artırmayı ve onların bilincini değiştirmeyi hedeflemektedir. Sosyal ve kültürel sorunları vurgulamasına rağmen aynı zamanda ekonomik ve siyasi konular üzerinde de durmaktadır. Bu da MST'nin politik ve ekonomik meseleleri göz ardı etmediğinin altını çizmektedir. Hareket, kırsal alanlarda sosyal ve ekonomik eşitsizliklerin ortaya çıkması ile doğmuştur. MST, topraksız aileleri etkileyen ekonomik ve siyasi konularda her zaman ilgili olmuştur. Hareket, yeni toplumsal hareketler gibi kendi özerkliğini korumaya ve siyasi parti ve örgütlerin bir parçası olmaktan kaçınmaya önem vermektedir. MST, sosyal ve ekonomik eşitsizliklere karşı direnmekte ve üyelerinin kendi yaşamları üzerinde güç kazanması amacıyla şiddet içermeyen mücadele biçimleri kullanmaktadır. MST, yeni toplumsal hareketler ile bazı benzer özelliklere sahip

olsa da farklılaşan birçok özelliği de vardır. Bu noktada, Buechler tarafından ileri sürülen yeni toplumsal hareketler teorisinin "siyasi versiyonunun" altını çizmek önemlidir. Buechler, işçi sınıfı hareketleri ile yeni toplumsal hareketlerin işbirliği içinde olmasının değişim için potansiyel yarattığını savunmaktadır. Bu değerlendirme, MST'nin de öne çıkardığı konuları destekler. Topraksızlar Hareketi, sosyal ve ekonomik eşitsizlikler sonucunda doğan sonuçları vurgular ve çözüm bulabilmek için stratejik sorular yöneltir. Nihai hedefleri için önemli eylemler gerçekleştirir. İzlediği mücadele yöntemleri ile üyelerini harekete geçirmekte ve bazı sınıf temelli hareketler ile ittifaklar kurmaktadır. İç yapısı, mücadele biçimleri ve ileri sürdüğü politikalar ile radikal değişiklikler planlamaktadır. Buechler tarafından yapılan bu ayrım, MST'nin ekonomik ve siyasi meselelere bakışını kavramak için anlamlı olabilir.

Topraksızlar Hareketi ayrıca Mariátegui'nin toprak meselesine karşı geliştirdiği bakış açısı ile de değerlendirilmektedir. Mariátegui, işçi ve köylülerin birlikte, devrim için önemli adımlar atabileceğini savunan Marksist bir yaklaşım geliştirmiştir. Tarım toplumunun yapısal değişimi ve kırsal mücadeleleri arasında bir bağlantı kuran Mariátegui kırsal ayaklanmaları savunur ve kırsal kuruluşların ve hareketlerin önemini vurgular. MST de toplumu ve ülkenin mevcut durumu dönüştürmeyi amaçlayan devrimci bir güç olarak görülmüştür. Yapısal sorunlara karşı mücadele etmekte ve topraksız aileler için yeni bir düzen oluşturulmasına çaba göstermektedir. Mariátegui'nin bu önemli düşünceleri, MST'nin sadece bir köylü hareketi olarak kalmadığını, fakat aynı zamanda mücadele sırasında bir sınıf karakteri kazanmış olduğunu vurgulamaktadır.

Buna ek olarak, Topraksız Kır İşçileri Hareketi Gramsci'nin bakış açısı ile de analiz edilmiştir. MST, hegemonik güce karşı çıkan ve toplumda alternatif bir hegemonya oluşturmayı amaçlayan karşı-hegemonik bir hareket olarak görülmektedir. Bir karşı-hegemonik aktör olarak MST egemen sisteme karşı direnir ve kırsal işçileri güçlendirmeye çalışır. Hareket, kır işçilerinin mücadelesi

ile ilgili aydınların önemini vurgulamaktadır. Aydınlar alternatif politikalar geliştirmekte ve toplumdaki sosyal değişimi desteklemektedir. MST, kendi iç yapısında bulunan aydınlara da özel bir önem vermekte ve her zaman eğitim sistemini güçlendirmek için çalışmaktadır. Topraksızlar Hareketi öne sürdüğü stratejiler ile sosyal ve ekonomik yapıları değiştirmek için alternatif çözümler üretmektedir. Bu mücadele yöntemleri Gramsci'nin mevzi savaşı kavramına işaret etmektedir. MST'nin mücadele biçimleri mevzi savaşı özelliklerine sahiptir. Hareketin eğitim sistemi, alternatif politikalar geliştirmesi, sosyal ilişkileri yeniden değerlendirmesi ve toplumun mevcut yapısını değiştirmeyi amaçlaması bir karşı-hegemonik girişimdir. Eğitim sisteminin yanı sıra, hareket egemen sisteme karşı çıkmakta ve toprak işgalleri ile topraksız aileler için alternatif bir yaşam sunmaktadır. MST ayrıca siyasi konular ve mevcut hükümetlerin politikaları ile ilgilidir. Bu gelişmeler doğrultusunda faaliyetlerini ve örgütsel stratejilerini şekillendirmektedir. Tüm bu önemli noktalar, MST'nin alternatif karşı-hegemonik politikalar geliştirmesi ve üyelerini güçlendirmesi için çaba gösterdiğinin altını çizmektedir.

Topraksız İşçileri Hareketi'nin sınıfsal dinamiklerini vurgulamak da bu noktada çok önemlidir. Hareket kendini organizasyon yapısı, hedefleri, etkinlikleri ile sınıf-temelli bir hareket olarak tanımlamaktadır. Sınıfsal dinamikleri vurgulamak amacıyla yapılan sınıf analizi ilişkilere, süreçlere ve deneyimlere dayalı olmalıdır. Sınıf, ekonomik ve politik bir kavramdır ve yapısal bir kategoriden daha fazlasıdır. Sınıf analizinin önemli noktası, sınıfın sadece yapısal bir pozisyon olmadığını, üretim ilişkileri ve sınıf bilincinin oluşması sürecinin önemli olduğunu göstermesidir. İlişkiler ve süreç olarak sınıf analizi, mücadeleleri, ortak deneyimleri ve bilinci gerektirmektedir. Kapitalist tarıma geçiş, toprak ve emek gücünün metalaşması ve bu nedenlerden doğan eşitsizlikler sınıfsal farklılaşmaya yol açmaktadır. Kapitalist sistem tarafından sömürülen kırsal işçiler, sermaye ile ilişkileri sayesinde bir sınıf olarak kabul edilir. Toplumsal hareketlerin kendi sınıfsal dinamikleri, sonuçları ve etkileri vardır.

Topraksızlar Hareketi, muhalif bir sınıf yapısına sahiptir. Tarihsel gelişimi, organizasyon yapısı, faaliyetleri ve deneyimleri kendi sınıf dinamiklerinin altını çizmektedir. Üyeleri kapitalist sistem tarafından sömürülmekte ve ikinci plana atılmaktadır. Var olan sistem çatışmalar ve mücadeleler yaratmaktadır. Bu nedenle, MST kullanılmayan toprakları işgal etmekte ve bu topraklarda yerleşim yerleri kurmaktadır. Bütün üyelerini birleştirmeyi amaçlayan bir sınıf söylemine sahiptir. MST'nin deneyimleri üyeleri arasında sınıf bilincinin yükselmesine ve nihai hedefleri için eylemlerin artmasına yol açmıştır. Hareketin iç yapısı da sınıf dinamiklerini yansıtmaktadır. MST organize ve eşitlikçi bir iç yapıya sahiptir. Tüm üyeleri eşit haklara sahiptir ve karar alma süreçlerinde aktif rol almaktadır. Hareket, toplumsal değişiklikler getirmek için alternatif yöntemler geliştirmektedir.

MST'nin gelişimini anlayabilmek için, hareketin tarihsel kökenlerini analiz etmek önemlidir. Topraksızlar Hareketi, arazilerin büyük toprak sahipleri elinde toplanması, atıl arazilerin ortaya çıkması ve birçok insanın topraklarını kaybetmesi sonucunda doğmuştur. Brezilya, tarihi boyunca toprak meselesine sahne olmuştur. Toprakların dağıtımı, sömürge döneminden itibaren adaletsiz ve sorunlu olmuştur. 1850 yılında kabul edilen Toprak Kanunu arazi edinmenin tek yolunu satın alma yapmıştır. Bu da kırsal ailelerin topraklara erişimini engellemiştir. Topraklar belirli bir kitlenin elinde yoğunlaşmış ve böylece mücadeleler görülmeye başlamıştır. MST'nin kuruluşuna kadar birçok mücadele adımı atılmış ve toprak meselesi ülkenin gündeminde olmuştur.

1964 ve 1978 yılları arasındaki diktatörlük döneminde, kırsal alanlardaki sosyal ve ekonomik eşitsizlikler daha da şiddetlenmiş ve toprak mücadelesi yoğunlaşmıştır. Askeri yönetim, tüm kırsal hareketlerin bastırılmasını ve bütün kırsal aktivistlerin yok edilmesini amaçlanmıştır. Tarımsal üretimin modernizasyonu yoluyla toprak dağıtılarak tarım ve toprak sorunu üzerinde durulmaya çalışılmıştır. Büyük ölçekli üretim bu dönemde tercih edilmiştir; bu da

küçük ölçekli üretimi ve aile çiftçiliğini olumsuz yönde etkilemiştir. Brezilya'nın ekonomi mucizesi döneminde, kırsal yoksul insanlar bu modernizasyon süreci sonucunda etkilenmişlerdir. 1980'lerin başlarında, verimli bir toprak reformu için mücadeleler kırsal kesimde başlamıştır. Kapitalist modernleşme ve tarımsal yeniden yapılanma kırsal göçü artırmış, toplumsal gerginlik ve toprak mücadelelerini tetiklemiştir. Bu süreç, 1984 yılında Topraksız Kır İşçileri Hareketi'nin ortaya çıkmasına yol açmıştır.

MST, kuruluşundan bu yana kırsal alanlarda ekonomik ve sosyal eşitsizliklere karşı mücadele etmiş, toprak ve toprak reformu için birçok gişimde bulunmuştur. Hareket, her zaman siyasi konular ve ülkenin siyasi durumu ile yakın bir ilişki içinde olmuştur. Hükümetlerin politikalarına göre stratejilerini güncellemiştir. Hiçbir zaman bir siyasi partiye dahil olmamış ya da organik bir siyasi partiye bağlı olmadan siyasete katılmıştır. Böylece kendi özerkliğini korumuştur. MST siyasi meseleler ile ilgilenmiş ve onlara göre stratejilerini ve politikalarını belirlemiştir.

1984 yılı sonunda, MST Brezilya'nın güney kesiminde etkin bir biçimde yer almaktaydı. Daha sonra, ülkenin diğer bölgelerine de yayılmaya başladı. Askeri yönetim sonrasında, 1985 yılında ilk kongresini düzenlemiştir. Kongrede, hareketin üyeleri toprak ve toprak reformu için tek çözüm yolunun toprak işgalleri olduğuna karar verdi. Toprak işgalleri ülke genelinde yer almaya başladı. 1980'li yılların ikinci yarısında, hareket kendini güçlendirmek için ulusal toplantılar düzenledi. Kırsal bölgelerdeki toprak işgalleri ile birlikte, aynı zamanda verimli bir tarım reformu hakkında hükümete baskı yapma siyasi mücadelenin önemini vurguladı.

Topraksız Kır İşçileri Hareketi, Cardoso hükümetinin iki dönemi boyunca farklı yaklaşımlar ile karşılaştı. İlk dönem (1995-1999), hükümet arazi sorununun ortadan kaldırılması üzerinde duruldu ve geniş yerleşim politikası izledi.

Mücadele yoğunlaştı ve işgal faaliyetleri tüm ülke çapında artmıştır. Hükümet bir tarım reformu programı uygulamak için çalıştı ve geniş yerleşim izin verdi. Başkan Cardoso piyasa odaklı yapısal reformlar yoluyla istikrarı sağlamlaştırmaya çalıştı. O neoliberal politikalar ve pazar liderliğindeki toprak reformu programını izledi. Bu nedenle Cardoso hükümetinin politikaları, tarım üreticileri için ciddi zorluklar getirdi. Hareket, işgal faaliyetlerini ve hükümete karşı baskısını yoğunlaştırdı. Hükümetin politikalarının bu olumsuz sonuçları hakkında farkındalığı artırmak için yürüyüşler, gösteriler ve mitingler düzenledi. Cardoso hükümetinin ikinci döneminde, hükümet konuya tutumunu değiştirdi. Hareket, 2000 ve 2002 yılları arasında düşüşe geçti. İşgallerin sayısı azalmış ve hareket kapasitesini zayıflatmıştır. Tarım reformu için hükümetin taahhüdü kötüleşti. Toprak işgalleri sayısındaki düşüşe rağmen, MST kırsal mücadelesini yoğunlaştırdı ve hükümetin politikası kararlarına karşı saldırgan bir tutum aldı.

Cardoso döneminden sonra, Lula da Silva 2003 yılında başkanlığa geldi. Bu yeni hükümet hakkındaki olumlu beklentilere rağmen, Lula hükümeti verimli bir tarım reformunu uygulamaya koyamadı. Tarım reformuna dair ekonomik hedefler ve siyasi içerik dışlandı. MST işbirliği beklentisi ile tüm doğrudan işgal eylemlerini durdurdu. Ancak, hükümet toprak sorunu hakkında bir ilerleme yapmakta başarısız oldu. Hükümet, tarım politikaları ile ilgili MST taleplerini karşılayamadı. Partisinin genel çerçevesi aksine, Başkan Lula neoliberal bir ekonomik program izledi. Hükümet toprak reformu ile ilgili önemli kararlar almadı, bu yüzden toprak dağıtımı bu dönemde durakladı. Hükümet topraksız ve yoksul insanlara hibe vermesine rağmen, bu destekler yetersiz ve verimsiz kaldı. Hükümet ayrıca tarım şirketleri ile yakın bir ilişki kurdu. Kırsal tarım faaliyetleri azaldı. Bu politika kararları farklı sorunlar ortaya çıkardı ve Başkan Lula politikaları hakkında hayal kırıklığı ortaya çıkardı. MST hükümete baskı amacıyla toprak işgallerini ve diğer faaliyetleri hızlandırmak için karar verdi.

Başkan Rouseff, 2011 yılında başkanlığa geldiğinde topraksızlar hareketi için yeni bir dönem başladı. MST, Rouseff'in topraksız insanlara toprak dağıtımını hızlandırmak için faaliyetlerini sürdürdü. Bu yeni hükümet Lula hükümetinin politikalarının sürdürülmesini savunduğunu ileri sürdü. MST'ye göre, tarım reformu politikasında herhangi bir ilerleme olmamıştır. MST, toprak için mücadelesinde kararlı kalmış, gösteriler, yürüyüşler ve işgaller organize etmiştir.

Buna ek olarak, gelişmiş organizasyon yapısı ile Topraksız Kır İşçileri Hareketi mücadelesinin biçimlerini benimsemiştir. MST toprak işgalleri, yürüyüşler, gösteriler, toplantılar ve sivil itaatsizlik eylemleri düzenlemektedir. Mücadelesini kamplarda ve yerleşim bölgelerinde sürdürmektedir. Kendi üretim sistemi ve kooperatifleri vardır. MST aynı zamanda mücadelenin önemli bir parçası olan etkili bir eğitim sistemine sahiptir. Mücadelenin bütün bu biçimleri nihai hedeflerine ulaşmak için hareketin kapasitesini güçlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Toprak sorunu, sosyal ve ekonomik eşitsizlikler ve mevcut hükümetin olumsuz politikası kararlarına karşı mücadelesi, mevzi savaşı özelliklerine sahiptir. MST üyelerine daha adil ve eşit bir yaşam sağlamak amacıyla alternatif politikalar düzenlemektedir.

Toprak işgalleri, MST'nin en etkili mücadele biçimidir. İşgaller aracılığıyla, topraksız insanları harekete geçirmekte ve baskıyı artırmaktadır. MST, işgallerin toplumda daha görünür olmasını sağlamaya ve toprak sorunu konusunda farkındalığı arttırmaya çalışmaktadır. Toprak işgalleri sayesinde, MST sosyal ve ekonomik eşitsizliklere karşı çıkmış ve topraksız insanları güçlendirmiştir. MST, toprakları işgal etmekte ve topraksız ailelere yeni bir yaşam sağlamaya çalışmaktadır. İşgallerden sonra o topraklarda kamplar ve yerleşim yerleri kurmakta ve ailelere kolektif bir hayat sunmaktadır. İşgaller ve ondan sonraki süreç sayesinde, MST üyeleri hakları için organize olmayı öğrenirler. Toprak işgalleri sayesinde, MST hegemonik güce karşı çıkmakta ve bir karşı-hegemonik

güç olarak yükselmektedir. MST üyeleri arasında bilinç ve deneyim artmakta ve hareketin sınıf dinamikleri daha görünür hale gelmektedir.

MST, aynı zamanda sivil itaatsizlik gösterileri, yürüyüşler, halk toplantıları ve mitingler gibi farklı mücadele yolları da kullanmaktadır. Bu eylemler, toprak konusunda bilinci arttırmayı ve bu süreçte yetkililere baskı yapmayı amaçlamaktadır. Hareket, topraksız insanların taleplerini ve görüşlerini ifade ettiği toplantılar düzenler ve toprak sorunu hakkında kamuoyunu bilinçlendirmeye çalışmaktadır. Bu mücadeleler sayesinde farklı görüşleri paylaşmak için demokratik ortamlar sağlanmış ve toprak reformu konusunda farklı bakış açıları tartışılmıştır.

MST'nin nihai hedeflerine ulaşmak için diğer önemli mücadele biçimleri de vardır. Hareket, etkin bir tarımsal üretim sistemine ve farklı kooperatiflere sahiptir. MST, pazarın olumsuz etkilerini azaltmak için kendi tarımsal üretim sistemi aracılığıyla yerleşim yerlerinde alternatif bir sistem inşa etmeyi hedeflemiştir. Ayrıca, hareketin teori ve pratiği birleştirerek toplumu dönüştürmeyi amaçlayan, iyi gelişmiş bir eğitim sistemi vardır. Eğitim sistemi üyeleri arasında katılım ve işbirliğini teşvik etmekte, toprak reformu konusunda toplumun bilincini yükseltmek için çabalamaktadır.

Bu çalışmada, Brezilya Topraksız Kır İşçileri Hareketi'nin toplumsal hareketlere sınıf konusunu geri getirdiğini göstermek amaçlanmıştır. Mücadele biçimleri ve örgütsel yapısıyla, süreç içinde sınıf özelliği kazanmış ve birçok diğer toplumsal hareketten farklı hale gelmiştir. Kapitalist sistemin doğasında olan sömürü ve eşitsizlikler Brezilyalı kırsal işçiler için farklılaşma ve baskıya neden olmuştur. Sosyal ve ekonomik sorunlar ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu süreç sonunda da mücadele ve direniş başlamıştır. Bu ortak deneyimler bilinci arttırmış ve kolektif eylemler ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu süreçler de MST'nin sınıf dinamiklerini vurgulamıştır.

Yerleşim bölgelerinde devam eden mücadelesi ve iç yapısıyla sınıfsal ilişkiler güçlendirilmiştir.

MST kendi yerleşim bölgelerinde alternatif bir dünya sunmakta ve egemen sistemi dönüştürme mücadelesini sürdürmektedir. Mücadele biçimleri ve organizasyon yapısı sayesinde, MST daha eşit bir topluma ulaşmayı ve doğa - toplum ilişkilerini değiştirmeyi için amaçlamaktadır. Brezilya Topraksız Kır İşçileri Hareketi, bu yıl otuzuncu yılını kutluyor. Son yıllarda birçok başarılı kazanım elde etmiştir. Fakat tüm kazanımlara rağmen, hareketin daha başarılı girişimleri olması gerekmektedir. Brezilya etkili bir tarım reformuna sahip değildir. Kapitalizm tarafından benimsenen tarım işletmeciliği tarımı istismar ve kırsal işçileri yok etmektedir. Büyük toprak sahipleri, çok uluslu şirketler ve burjuva medya tarım modelini tanıtmak ve kırsal toplumsal mücadeleyi vazgeçirmek için çalışmaktadır. Hükümet topraksız ailelere herhangi bir tarım reformu sunamamıştır. Bu nedenlerden dolayı, MST toprak, toprak reformu ve aynı zamanda da daha eşit bir toplum için mücadelesini sürdürecektir.

Appendix B: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Çelikten
Adı : Merve
Bölümü : Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce): Land Struggle and Beyond: Landless Rural Workers' Movement of Brazil

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ☒ Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☒
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
3. Tezimden bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ☐

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: