



universität
wien

MASTERARBEIT

Titel der Masterarbeit

„Who is talking? The changing definition of peasant and trends in Indian agriculture since the 1990s“

Verfasser

David Christopher Bexte

angestrebter akademischer Grad

Master (MA)

Wien, 2012

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt:

A 067 805

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt:

Individuelles Masterstudium:
Global Studies – a European Perspective

Betreuerin / Betreuer:

ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Martina Kaller-Dietrich

UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG



universität
wien

MASTERARBEIT / MASTER THESIS

Titel der Masterarbeit /Title of the master thesis

**Who is talking? The changing definition of peasant
and trends in Indian agriculture since the 1990s**

Verfasser /Author

David Christopher Bexte

angestrebter akademischer Grad / acadamic degree aspired

Master (MA)

Wien, 2012

Studienkennzahl :

A 067 805

Studienrichtung:

Individuelles Masterstudium:
Global Studies – a European Perspective

Betreuer/Supervisor:

ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Martina Kaller-Dietrich

Table of contents

Abstract.....	1
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Objectives and scope.....	4
3. State of research.....	7
3.1. Changes in peasant livelihoods.....	7
3.2. Changes in peasant research.....	9
4. India's agriculture in a period of transition.....	14
4.1. The process of economic reforms.....	14
4.2. New demands in Indian agriculture.....	18
4.2.1. Farmers' indebtedness and suicides.....	18
4.2.2. The problem of decreasing growth rates and environmental degradation.....	21
4.2.3. The Evergreen Revolution.....	26
4.3. Towards a new era: The emergence of a transnational agricultural space.....	29
5. The entity of the peasant and its place in a transnational agricultural space.....	32
5.1. Discourse 1: Subaltern Studies.....	32
5.2. Discourse 2: Post-development.....	39
5.2.1. The idea of post-development, the peasant and the critique of post-development.....	39
5.2.2. Arturo Escobar, Akhil Gupta and the notion of hybridity.....	51
5.3 Discourse 3: Food sovereignty.....	60
5.3.1. The food sovereignty movement.....	60
5.3.2. Food sovereignty, food security and the right to food.....	68
6. Further research.....	79
7. Conclusion.....	80
References.....	84

Abstract

My master's thesis deals with changes in agriculture since the beginning of the 1990s. The guiding question is how the position of the peasant was addressed in this context. The first part deals with changes in Indian agriculture, specifically the globalization of national agricultural market, starting with the Uruguay Round of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). I also address the discussion of the crisis in Indian agriculture which has been of increasing importance in the past twenty years. This crisis presents itself in ecology, economy and social structures. Crisis in this context refers to issues of growing indebtedness, suicide rate among farmers, decreasing agricultural growth rates and environmental degradation. The Evergreen Evolution has been promoted as a solution to the crisis.

Against this backdrop, questions about the role, agency and identity of the peasant have become more urgent. The question as to the agency of the peasant has become especially important. The second part focuses on how peasants have been defined and their role in society in the years following the Green Revolution. Three different discourses will be examined: Subaltern Studies, post-development and food sovereignty. It is also explored to what extent a hidden essentialism is expressed in these discourses.

Meine Masterarbeit setzt sich mit agrarischem Wandel seit dem Anfang der 1990er auseinander und fragt, wie vor diesem Hintergrund die Position des Bauern problematisiert wurde. Im ersten Teil wird agrarischer Wandel in Indien erörtert. Mit der Uruguay Runde der World Trade Organisation wurde Anfang der 1990er-Jahre die Integration nationaler Agrarmärkte in einen globalisierten Markt eingeleitet. Seit dieser Zeit ist die Diskussion um eine Krise der indischen Landwirtschaft zentral für die Politik des indischen Staates. Diese Krise spiegelt sich in der Ökologie, Ökonomie und der sozialen Struktur wieder. Konkret bedeutet dies: wachsende Verschuldung von Bauern, Bauernselbstmorde, zurückgehendes Wachstum und steigende Umweltschäden. Es wird das Modell der Evergreen Revolution als eine Möglichkeit der Krisenbewältigung dargestellt.

Vor diesem Hintergrund hat die Frage nach der Rolle des Bauern eine neue Brisanz erhalten. Es stellt sich die Frage nach seiner Handlungsfähigkeit (agency). Darum konzentriert sich der zweite Teil auf wechselnde Definitionen des Bauern und auf seine Position in einer neuen Ordnung nach dem Auslaufen der Grünen Revolution. Es werden drei Diskurse thematisiert: Subaltern Studies, post-development und food-sovereignty. Dabei wird nach der Kategorisierung des Bauern gefragt. Zudem wird kritisch erörtert, inwiefern in diesen Diskursen ein verborgener Essentialismus zum Ausdruck kommt.

1. Introduction

In 1985 Berry Wendell wrote his essay "What are people for?" in which he refers to the notion of the "vanishing peasant" (Berry 1990). Writing about farmers' migration he looks very critically at the argument "that there are too many people on the farm" (Berry 1990: 123). As human laborers and peasants leave the countryside humans are replaced by machinery, petroleum, chemicals, credit, and other agribusiness services. He argues that in this way rural communities and rural economies, as well as the environment itself, deteriorate. He paints a black picture, referring to a possible state where only "few people any longer know how to do [farming]" (Berry 1990: 125). While productivity is high, it "is a productivity based on the ruin both of the producers and of the source of production" (ibid.). 27 years have passed since Berry wrote his essay.

Since the 1990s the questions addressed by Berry have received renewed interest and rural food production has become one of the major issues of the current period of globalization. With La

Via Campesina a powerful transnational peasant movement has emerged. In the affluent societies of the West a new trend towards local production or even self-production is visible. The discussion in regards to the phenomenon of land grab is now a major point of contention in discourse about globalization. In the 2000s influential donor institutions refocused on agriculture. The World Bank has been extremely active in putting the complex of development and agriculture back on top of the international political agenda. In 2007 the World Bank published its report “Agriculture for development” (World Bank 2007). In 2010 another extensive report by the World Bank, which focused on land grabbing “Rising Global Interest in Farmland. Can It Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits?” (Deininger et al. 2010) was distributed to the public. In 2009 the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) delivered their co-written report “Land grab or development opportunity? Agricultural investment and international land deals in Africa“ (Cotula et al. 2009). In these reports the right strategies for production, which suit best the peasant as an agricultural producer, their position within wider political and social frameworks and the purpose of production have been crucial questions. The recent trends suggest that the question what or who is a peasant is of major relevance.

The initial idea for this thesis was formulated during one semester of studies in India. I stayed mostly in Delhi and by travelling through the country I could get only glimpses of what the living and working conditions are on the countryside. In addition, I have never physically experienced a state of subordination or suppression. Therefore my written assessment should not be mistaken as an account of how it is to be a peasant. What I offer is how different groups/theories/concepts have dealt with the question of peasant as a neutral entity. When I refer to different conceptions of peasantry by no means is this an attempt to establish any hierarchy or moral judgments. It is exactly this bipolarity, such as traditional/modern, underdeveloped/developed, which has been targeted in recent decades.

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), where I was studying, is still dominated by Marxist thought. This was very different from the scientific environment I experienced before coming to India. It is then that Subaltern Studies caught my attention. Reflecting the differences between the approaches I was taught during my studies and the particular emphasis on strong leftist thinking at the JNU I became curious about how a particular category of the peasant is reconfigured, criticized and reformulated in different discourses.

After the initial first two chapters I will establish the context for the discussion of the entity of the peasant. I assess shifts in the Indian agricultural economy since the early 1990s. This includes the process of the liberalization of agriculture, the introduction of agriculture into a global commodity market and the debate of an Indian agricultural crisis. I will outline the notion of the “Evergreen Revolution”. This is interesting for various reasons. First, it is because the notion has been put forward by Monkombu Sambasivan Swaminathan who is one of the most influential Indian agricultural scientists. Second, the Evergreen Revolution has been explicitly promoted as the future model of Indian agriculture. The question then is, what is the place of the peasant in this environment and who defines it. In other words, the question of agency becomes central.

After that I analyze descriptions of the entity of the peasant. I am addressing three discourses: Subaltern Studies, post-development and food sovereignty. The chapter on Subaltern Studies, can be understood as an introduction. I consider that it is useful due to the fact, that it raises questions about how to view the Other which the two other discourses also address.

Post-development and food sovereignty have emerged since the late 1980s/early 1990s. Post-development questions development practice and the institutions and strategies linked to it, which emerged after World War II. After a discussion of major arguments, their critiques and the genesis of this school of thinking and research I focus in particular on two specific contributions.

The first one was written by Alberto Escobar. In 1995 he published his monograph “Encountering Development. The Making and Unmaking of the Third World”. In this monograph he applied a post-structuralist understanding of “development” and discourse analysis. The book

marks the emergence of a new theoretical framework - the school of post-development theory. The second theoretical contribution is that of Akhil Gupta. In 1998 he published his monograph "Postcolonial development: Agriculture in the making of modern India". It is written in the tradition of postcolonial history and is based on an ethnographic study conducted by the author himself in the late 1980s/early 1990s.

Next, I will proceed to the concept of food sovereignty. This concept again raises the question of development and has a distinct political agenda. It is a concept which at its core has very practical implications rather than being an academic discourse.

2. Objectives and scope

The entity of the peasant has been much discussed, framed and constructed since World War II and in particular since the 1980s. My focus is on the theoretical discussion and how the entity of the peasant has been incorporated into the specific discourses of Subaltern Studies, post-development theory and the concept of food sovereignty. The peasant needs to be understood as a construct rather than a natural fixed entity. I will therefore not deliver any pre-formulated definition of the peasant but rather, in line with Packard and Cooper I will attempt to look into "projects of building and fracturing hegemonies" (Packard & Cooper 1997: 13). I understand the idea of the peasant as a surface onto which different actors project their own ideas based on different interests and research agendas. As a result the entity of the peasant has been drawn into specific discourses and given new shapes.

One of the major goals of this thesis is a discussion of concepts mentioned above. It is interesting that though there are substantial differences, commonalities can be observed in the various concepts. In other words, Subaltern Studies, post-development theory and the concept of food sovereignty are deeply interconnected with each other. I argue that there are several markers which all these lines of research and concepts have in common. These markers are autonomy,

visibility and sovereignty. Autonomy, I understand as the ability to formulate and act independently, the ability to resist acts of subordination. Visibility refers to the way in which the entity is put on display. Visibility is low when a particular design or frame which conceals the issue at stake is in place. Finally sovereignty refers to a sense of ownership, to something which cannot be taken away from you without permission. These concepts are important as they have revitalized the understanding of peasantry, rejecting the notion of the absent, rational and passive peasant.

These concepts and lines of research were criticized from the beginning. Subaltern Studies emerged in the 1980s, post-development theory in the early 1990s and food sovereignty towards the end of the 1990s. While the last one is more recent and its impact a matter of serious debate, the two others have already had an interesting history. I will explore this history, outlining the critiques and, at the same time, pointing out their contribution to the entity of the peasant. I apply an historical approach. By looking at the roots and criticism of these theories it is possible to establish a position, which can help to shed new light on the present and the very recent past.

My second goal is to assess shifts in the Indian agricultural economy in the 1990s. This will include how the process of liberalization has had an impact on the agricultural sector. Furthermore, I will address discourses of crises, referring to farmers' suicides and the debate on economic depression. In this section I will put a particular focus on the notion of the "Evergreen Revolution". This concept has been promoted as the future model of the Indian agriculture and it is part of the US-Indian Agricultural Knowledge Initiative, established in 2005. I will examine the proposal and its instruments.

The research questions therefore are as follows: How has the peasant been constructed by a selected group of different theoretical frameworks? What is the place of peasants within these frameworks? How are peasants depicted in these frameworks? What were major points of concern in peasant issues in the 1990s? What does that mean for the entity of the peasant in times of a globalized agricultural economy? What are the future challenges?

I regard both levels – the theoretical and the practical one – as complimentary. Theory and practice are not exclusive to each other. Discourse is always embedded in material practices and vice versa. Therefore, in order to assess the peasant, both spheres need to be addressed.

My thesis focuses on the notion of “peasant essentialism” and thus it is necessary to give a brief definition of the term. In their contributions Bernstein & Byres and Kahn offer guidelines for defining peasant essentialism. Kahn’s focus is on peasant ideologies. In these ideologies peasants are referred to as “a somewhat mixed bag of small-scale, primarily but not solely agricultural, producers who make a significant contribution to the national product of societies in which they are dominated by more powerful classes, bureaucracies, and the like” (Kahn 1985: 49).

According to Bernstein and Byres peasant essentialism is based on various qualities of “peasantness”, linked to various analytical methods and with various ideological effects. These markers refer to household farming organized for simple reproduction (subsistence), the structures of the community (village), and commitment to a way of life based on household and community, kin and locale, which is closely tied to a harmonious relationship with nature.

Qualities of essential “peasantness” can be expressed by formal theories of peasant behavior and in sociological and culturalist conceptions of what makes peasants special. Essentialist descriptions emphasize the relation with other social groups and entities, highlighting the relations of subordination and exploitation as crucial for the peasant condition and the politics of peasant resistance (Bernstein & Byres 2001: 6).

From a methodological perspective peasant essentialism shows that core elements of “peasant society” generate a distinctive internal dynamic or combine different dynamics (Bernstein & Byres 2001: 6f). Here, relations between peasants and people in power add up to various forms of appropriation and oppression external to the inner dynamic of peasant existence. Peasant essentialism is not tied to a particular political ideology. People at both ends of the political spectrum address it to explain the disappearance of the peasantry necessary to economic, social and cultural progress (Bernstein & Byres 2001: 7).

In sum, an essentialist perspective does not pay attention to difference. It neglects change over time and overlooks that there are no characteristics which could be applied to one group. More precise, “it denies or at least obscures the individuality of individual members of the essentialized culture” (Sauviat 2007: 102).

3. State of research

This thesis deals with the field of peasant studies. In their review on the work published within the Journal of Peasant Studies (JPS) Henry Bernstein and Terence Byres provide a good point of departure. They refer to “peasant studies” as the study of “peasantries and their social structure; the nature and logic of peasant agriculture; peasantries and their ‘moral communities’; and peasants and politics” (Bernstein & Byres 2001: 2). As set out in my research question and my objectives, I will focus on descriptions of peasantry and agricultural change in India.

I will outline the trends and changes over recent decades which have been documented in research. The first part of this chapter addresses the changes in the conditions of a peasant’s everyday life. The second part demonstrates changes in research interests.

3.1. Changes in peasant livelihoods

In the mid-2000s for the first time in human history more people lived in cities than in rural areas. In 2030 all developing regions are estimated to exceed 50% rural population (UN-Habitat 2008a; UN-Habitat 2008b). There has been a significant shift in the urban/rural ratio. In 1970 the total world population was 3.7 billion, with 2.4 billion people living in rural and 1.3 billion living in urban areas (Booras 2009: 6). According to the UN World Urbanization Project, in 2010 the total world urban population was 3.56 billion. In 2010 the world rural population amounted to 3.34 billion. The report provides figures for individual countries. According to these the total Indian urban population in 2010 was 378 million, compared to 109 million in 1970. The total

Indian rural population in 2010 was 846 million, compared to 444 million in 1970 (UNDESA 2011).

With regard to the population in agricultural and non-agricultural areas the change is even more significant. In 1970 the figures were 2.0 billion in agricultural areas and 1.7 billion people in non-agricultural areas. In 2010 the ratio was 2.6 billion to 4.2 billion (Borras 2009: 6f). According to the World Bank, food production has to be doubled by 2050 in order to feed a growing world population. It is argued that developing countries in particular need to invest more in food production systems (Borras 2009: 7).

Agricultural trade has been significantly increased in the recent decades. This can be shown by looking at commodity figures as well as overall trade figures. The total global production of cereals stood at 1.6 billion tons in 1979-1981, increasing to 2.3 billion tons in 2004. Global meat production has doubled, from 0.14 billion tons in 1979-1981 to 0.25 billion tons in 2004 (Borras 2009: 7; following figures on the same page). The production of fruits and vegetables amounted to 1.4 billion tons in 2004, up from only 0.63 billion tons in 1979-1981. The total value of all agricultural export increased dramatically in recent decades. In 2005 the total value of all agricultural food exports reached \$654 billion, compared to \$52 billion in 1970. Thus agricultural trade increased 12 times over (*ibid.*), but gains have been distributed disproportionately. Global inequality has increased rapidly at both national and international levels (Edelmann & Haugerud cit. in Borras 2007: 8).

With regard to the political frameworks global processes of deepening and convergence have taken place. Debt crises in South America, Asia and Africa have led to structural adjustment policies. In India this happened at the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s. As a result domestic agriculture has been drawn into the nexus of global finance and credit. Consequently agribusiness has replaced agriculture in large parts of the world. Farmers have become managers of production processes. A dismantling of restrictions on trade and tariffs has opened the market for new actors. Transnational companies have moved into these new spaces and exploited them. The

international market is marked by high degrees of concentration. Nowadays private companies dominate the agricultural sector. According to the World Investment Report 2009 public investments in agriculture in the 1980s/1990s, measured as proportion of the of gross capital formation decreased. Furthermore, the report notes that agriculture's economic importance in developing countries has fallen significantly since the 1970s, mostly due to a shift towards manufacturing and services. In addition, the share of agriculture in total ODA (Official Development Assistance) dropped from 13% in 1985 to 4% between 2002 and 2007 (UNCTAD 2009).

Nevertheless there are signs that governments try to recapture lost terrain, in particular due to high volatile markets. For instance, governments have shifted from anti-farmer to pro-farmer policies (Dethier and Effenberger 2012: 182). Biotechnology has become a major issue all over the globe. The "gene revolution" followed the "Green Revolution" (Parayil 2003; Pingali & Raney 2005). The protests against genetically modified organisms (GMO) have spread all over the globe. Those in favor and those against clash in their descriptions of GMOs as "miracle seeds" or "suicide seeds" (Herring 2005).

3.2. Changes in peasant research

Several topics in the debate about agricultural changes and the peasantry have lost their relevance or have been reconfigured. I focus on the debates which have taken place within the *Journal of Peasant Studies* (JPS). The first edition of this journal was published in 1973. It has become one of the most important platforms for discussing peasant issues, and reflects the major research trends over the last few decades. The research debates within the journal are well documented by Henry Bernstein and Terence Byres (Bernstein & Byres 2001) and Tom Brass (Brass 2005).

First, the notion of "class" and related concepts are still points of reference but their importance has been reduced. The JPS was established against the historic background of the then recent wars in Vietnam and the uprising in China. In 1973 the first full translation of Marx's "Grundrisse" into English was published. In addition, Gramsci's prison notebooks were republished in 1971. The rise of Maoism challenged the assumptions of "classical" Marxism. Several

publications in the late 1960s and early 1970s discussed various dimensions of “peasants” and “peasantry”. For example Eric Wolf’s book “Peasants” (1966) discussed the peasant as a specific single social entity over time and place. In addition in 1966, the first translation of A.V. Chayanov’s “The Theory of Peasant Economy”, in which he describes the nature and logic of peasant agriculture, had a major impact (Bernstein & Byres 2001: 4). The notion of class differentiation was central to the debate which addressed among other things different types of feudalism or the conditions and dynamics of commodification initiated by colonial integration into world markets and the division of labor (Bernstein & Byres 2001: 22). Class differentiation also featured prominently in the question of development and underdevelopment. Research focused on “how agrarian class structures, their contributions to general economic development, and the forms and effects of the politics they generate, shape and are shaped by state policies and practices” (Bernstein & Byres 2001: 20).

In research about South Asia the notions of “backward” or “semi-feudal” structures and their role in the process of agrarian change were fundamental concerns. The reference to these structures meant to study “the ways in which, and extent to which differentiation is inflected, and arguably constrained by elements of pre-capitalist relations and practices in commoditization [equivalent to commodification]” (Bernstein & Byres 2001: 24). In research about India it was important to look at dominant class forces which were preventing the transition to capitalism by particular groups exploiting bonded labor and thereby cementing their position in politics and the economy (ibid.). A particular sort of class differentiation emerged in the 1980s. This was the debate of India versus Bharat, one in which a “true” agricultural realm was pitched against a “false” commercialized urban realm. The debate about an urban bias began in the late 1970s and provoked heated debates until the early 1990s (Bernstein & Byres 2001: 22f). What has become evident is that these dichotomies – pre-capitalist/capitalist, peasant economy/capital economy, urban/rural – need to be treated with care. These distinctions have been blurred, with people searching for “their means of production across different sites of the social division of labor:

urban and rural; agricultural and non-agricultural; wage employment and self-employment” (Bernstein cit. in Borras 2009: 8). Labor has become more flexible and mobile. Contemporary labor migration is a complicated phenomenon, marked by multiple directions and a very heterogeneous character. In addition, diversification of rural households’ ways of earning has been a major driver of change (Borras 2009: 8).

Second, the scope of peasant politics has widened significantly. Since the late 1980s ecology and gender have had a strong impact on the question of agricultural change and the peasantry. In the second half of the 1980s the influence of gender studies on the field of peasant studies became clear. The field of gender studies focused on the silence about the role of women in various areas, such as the household (Bernstein and Byres 2001: 23). Critics emphasized several gender-related tensions in the rural realm. These critics discussed the role of women as landless agricultural laborers and small property owners. Furthermore, the impact of patriarchal ideology within kinship and household on women, plus female struggles within each of these domains, was debated (Brass 2005: 157f).

Ecology, as an integral part of agricultural practice, was introduced into the discussions. Both areas of research, ecology and gender, were closely linked, as women play a crucial part in agricultural processes, particularly by maintaining ecological balance. In addition the contribution by women in resisting subordination was highlighted. For instance, in their book “Ecofeminism”, Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva argue that women’s work needs to be regarded as central to biodiversity conservation and utilization as it involves crossing between sectors and performing multiple tasks (Mies & Shiva 1995: 166). Ecological issues became even more crucial, as environmental degradation due to overuse of fertilizers in the Green Revolution could no longer be ignored (Shiva 1991). The study of ecological change as an essential element of agricultural change has been a core issue since then. Climate change also plays a significant role for the peasant economy. It is estimated that if average temperature increases by more than three degrees yields of major crops will decrease by 20-40% in parts of Asia, Latin America and Africa (Borras 2009: 9).

Third, the spectrum and the nature of the actors who interfere in peasant politics have widened. It relates in particular to the study of the nature of peasant movements. Since the early 1990s the phenomenon of transnational mass peasants' movements has received considerable attention. According to Borras, what marks recent movements, is internationalization and localization, building on horizontal solidarity and polycentrism (Borras 2009: 11). Movements, such as La Via Campesina, have exploited the new space. The concept of food sovereignty was the center of these movements. It highlights peasants as sovereign owners of the soil and the product, opening up space for alternative practices in the agricultural realm, distinct from large-scale industrial agricultural production. The collection of essays edited by Annette Aurélie Desmarais, Hannah Wittman and Nettie Wiebe (Wiebe et al. 2011) provides an overview of the crucial debates within this framework. Their critique of industrial agricultural production is directed not exclusively towards the state but also towards transnational companies. National and international agribusiness enterprises have consolidated the market in recent decades (for research on national and international agribusiness enterprises see Brass 2005: 158). The rise of new forms of social movement is linked to a renewed discussion about agricultural populism. Brass links contemporary agricultural populism to "the emergence of the 'new' populist postmodernism, characterized by the re-essentialization of peasants as cultural subjects" (Brass 2005: 159). Critics argued for a shift in the development debate from "peasantness" as economic alienation to "peasantness" as cultural empowerment (Brass 2005: 162).

Fourth, recent developments have threatened the role of the state as the crucial entity of decision making. Developing nation states have experienced a threefold challenge: globalization, (partial) decentralization, and privatization (Borras 2009: 10). Decision-making in agricultural politics takes place on both regional and international levels: regionally within the EU or regional trade agreements, and internationally through international institutions. This does not mean that nation states have become obsolete. Rather the result has been a transformation of the state in terms of its scope, level and direction of development intervention (ibid.). Convergence in domestic agri-

cultural policies is incomplete and nation states/regions have maintained support schemes for their farmers. “Smart subsidies” have been proposed as an alternative (Dethier & Effenberger 2012: 182). Neoliberal policies have restricted state interventions. But it has become clear, that some state intervention is needed in order to counter the volatility of the international market. According to Dethier and Effenberger coping with volatility will be one of the major challenges of the coming decades (Dethier & Effenberger 2012: 176).

Fifth, the idea of development itself has been criticized by an emerging number of scholars. Agriculture has always played a significant role in development. This will become obvious when discussing post-development theory. Post-development theory emerged in the early 1990s and is now an established discipline within the academic discourse on peasants. Here emphasis is on the perception of the “poor peasant” as a product of development practices. The Development Dictionary (1991), edited by Wolfgang Sachs, was one of the first publications, to explicitly address demand for a radical break with the status quo with a new vocabulary and new practices (Sachs et al. 1992).

Two collections of studies, published in 1997 and 1998, the first one by Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard (Packard & Cooper 1997) and the second one by Majid Rahnema and Victoria Bawtree (Rahnema et al. 1998), highlight the increasing interest in these questions and the diversity of approach. Post-development was widely criticized from the beginning. Critiques of post-development thinking were putting forward among others claims of romanticizing or post-development being advocacy instead of argument. I will come back to these critiques when I look more closely at post-development theory.

4. India's agriculture in a period of transition

Since the late 1980s/early 1990s crucial shifts have taken place by the gradual opening-up of the Indian economy. Here structural adjustments, which have been starting in the early 1990s and the process of integration of the Indian agriculture economy into the World Trade Organization (WTO) are most important. At the same time new demands in Indian agriculture have emerged.

In the first part of this of this chapter I will focus on the process of economic reforms and the integration of Indian agriculture into the WTO trade regime. In the following subchapter on new demands in Indian agriculture I will concentrate on three issues. First, I discuss socio-economic factors which include the emergence of indebtedness and rural suicides as structural problems of the Indian agriculture. Second, I address the debate on environmental degradation and the debate on decreasing economical growth rates. Third, I present the model of the Evergreen Revolution. The Evergreen Revolution addresses both debates presented before. It aims at extending the Green Revolution but without the weaknesses of the first Green Revolution (1960s-1980s). Finally I will summarize the findings and outline briefly what the conditions of a new transnational agricultural space might be.

4.1. The process of economic reforms

In 1991 the Indian state embarked on the process of liberalizing by adopting fundamental economic reforms. Thus action was the result of externally and internally influenced economic distortions. In the 1980s India's foreign debts had increased dramatically. Therefore the government pursued a strategy of providing economic stimulus by borrowing money. This led to serious problems at the end of the decade when international creditors rejected further credits to the Indian state. A large fiscal deficit, enormous external debts, and a subsequent payments crisis in 1990/91 became major arguments for IMF stabilization-politics (Chandrasekhar & Ghosh 2002: 16f). Internal factors referred to: (a) an excessive presence of government both as a regulator and a participant in economic activity; (b) excessive government spending and a high fiscal deficit; (c)

inadequate liberalizing reform. As a consequence reforms were supposed to include (a) a curtailment of the fiscal deficit as the fundamental task of fiscal policy; (b) accelerated trade liberalization (abolishment of quantitative restrictions on imports and reducing customs tariffs); (c) dismantling of control on free operations of large industrial capital, both domestic and foreign. Other points were the provision of concessions to foreign investors, direct and indirect tax concessions to industry and emphasis upon financial liberation, both internal and external (Chandrasekhar & Ghosh 2002: 18). The economic reforms did not contain a particular packet designed for agriculture. It was assumed that freeing agricultural markets and liberalizing external trade in agricultural commodities would work as incentives for enhanced investment and output in the agricultural sector. In addition, broader trade liberalization was expected to shift intersectoral terms of trade in favor of agriculture (Chandrasekhar & Ghosh 2002: 26).

Nevertheless rural areas featured in some elements of the post-reform strategy. There was a tendency to reduce central government revenue expenditure on rural developments which meant for instance declining subsidies on fertilizers. Overall per capita government expenditure on rural areas was on the decline. It included reduced investments in public infrastructure and energy. For the public distribution system (PDS) reduced investments translated in reduced spread and rising prices. Priority sector lending was abolished, thereby reducing the availability of rural credit. Subsequent reforms included liberalization and removal of restrictions on internal trade in agricultural commodities as well as liberalization of external trade (Chandrasekhar & Ghosh 2002: 26f). Among others this meant the closure of 4000 rural bank posts in the 2000s, the increase of prices for basic inputs, such as water, and high interest rates on rural credits to name just a few examples (Sainath 2010: 56).

The reforms of the early 1990s are in line with the discussion of lowering tariffs and trade restrictions connected to global agricultural imports and exports. This discussion emerged within international institutions. The key arena was the Uruguay Round, which was founded when major international conferences on development and sustainability, the most important one being

the Rio Conference, took place. The Uruguay Round was unique, because for the first time international trade regulations included agriculture. In the former General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) agriculture had received “exceptional” treatment only within the original rules. This meant that trade in agricultural products was not restricted by the rules, which were established by the GATT agreements (Coleman et al. 2004). The Uruguay Round urged governments to implement reforms in order to (a) cut subsidies on food exports over 6 years by 36% in value and 21% in volume, (b) to cut 20% of domestic farm support, and (c) to reduce 36% tariffs on imports. Developing countries had to comply to the new non-trade-distorting or green-box policies, but to a lesser extent (Atkins & Bowler 2001: 181).

In the beginning of 2012 India and the European Union reached the final stage of the discussion with regard to a new Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The FTA includes agricultural goods, particularly dairy and poultry, and focuses on the dismantling of tariffs and trade restrictions. It forces India to dismantle all applied tariffs (agricultural and non-agricultural goods) by 90% over the next seven years (Paasch et al. 2011: 4).

It is striking, that the whole discussion was very much hidden from the public. Information regarding the conditions of the treaty was hardly distributed. The FTA did not require the approval by parliament. Apart from industrial unions and government counselors almost nobody has distributed information concerning the treaty (Sengupta 2012: 2).

This process is remarkable for the fact that one pillar of the Indian State after independence was self-reliance. Huge customs and tariffs on imports and exports were established. For decades India had subscribed to characteristics of a closed economy. This had crucial implications for policy making. The perspective was inward. Development was supposed to be provided by the Indian state itself. Powerful leader figures from the Congress, such as Jawaharlal Nehru, dominated politics and decision-making. In terms of these politics the FTA marked a rupture. As mentioned above the FTA aims at cutting the restrictions dramatically and will allow European dairy and poultry producers to enter the market in a manner, which is significantly different from earli-

er proceedings. In addition, it questions the leading role of the government for the development of the Indian state.

Even more important, the treaty might have substantial impact on local economies and the civil society. Concerning these issues an important report titled “Right to food impact assessment of the EU-India trade agreement” was published by Misereor, the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, Third World Network, Anthra, Glopolis and Ecofair Trade Dialogue (Paasch et al. 2011). The report applies the Human Rights Impacts Assessment (HRIAs) in order to analyze possible impacts on the human right to food.

A particular focus is on the dairy and poultry market. Both of them are essential sources of livelihood particularly for marginal or small farmers. Some figures of the report highlight this reality. There are 14.08 million farmers in India which are distributed over 135,439 village dairy cooperative societies. About 75% of the estimated 70 million milk animals are the property of landless, marginal or small farmers. Data estimates that dairy provides one third of the gross income of rural households and nearly half of that of the landless (Paasch et al. 2011: 4).

A similar picture applies to the poultry sector. Poultry production in India 2009-10 accounted for 489 million birds. In the same time frame egg production reached 59.84 billion. These figures put India into the top three of countries worldwide in egg production. 85% of the country’s poultry stock is kept by landless, marginal and small-scale farmers (Paasch et al. 2011: 5). Backyard poultry keeping provides crucial income for landless and marginal farmers. Backyard poultry keeping functions as an essential survival strategy by way of diversifying risks.

The authors of the report conclude that the FTA is highly risky for both sectors and can have fundamental negative consequences. In the dairy sector, they argue, negative impacts occur mainly through price depressions and the consequent inability to pay back loans. In addition, the partial substitution of national milk production with imported milk powder would disconnect national supply from growing national demand and a higher dependency on the world market would raise the transmission of volatile international prices to the national level, making it more

difficult to maintain fair consumer prices during international price hikes. They reached similar conclusions about the probable impact on the poultry sector. According to them, the right to food is in danger, affecting in particular small-scale contract farmers involved in commercial broiler production (ibid.). Positive effects are not ruled out. Nevertheless the authors say that all tariff lines for poultry and dairy products should be exempted from tariff cuts (Paasch et al. 2011: 8).

The report clearly signals that the FTA may have serious negative consequences on the access to food and the right to food. For example, for many farmers it might be impossible to compete with European products due to European subsidies. If rural food production does not provide an essential income anymore people might be forced to migrate to the cities. Thereby pressure on urban housing and infrastructure increases. The other option might be an increase in suicide rates as farmers are unable to secure livelihoods for their families anymore. This again raises serious questions about development policy. How do we define relations between rural and urban sectors? What is the position of agriculture in an open and deregulated economy? How can we balance common and individual interests? The FTA is not the end of a process but once again highlights the interdependency of “development”, food production and social structures.

4.2. New demands in Indian agriculture

As outlined in the previous chapter new demands have emerged since the 1990s as a consequence of the Green Revolution and of the integration in a global commodity market. At the same time the talk of a crisis in Indian agriculture has been a recurring theme. In order to understand the reason for this one needs to look at various debates which have dominated agrarian politics since the 1990s.

4.2.1. Farmers' indebtedness and suicides

Indebtedness became a structural problem of Indian agriculture in the 1990s. In 2003 the Situation Assessment Survey of Farmers, headed by the National Sample Survey Organization, was

conducted. In 2005 its first report was published. This report provides an in-depth study of the problem of indebtedness. The report covers all India. The report defines an indebted household as a household which has “any loan in cash or kind and its value at the time of transaction was 300 Rs. or more” (Government of India 2005a: 1). A farmer is defined as “a person who possessed some land and was engaged in agricultural activities on any part of that land during the last 365 days” (ibid.).

The findings clearly highlight the magnitude of the problem. According to the report at the all-India level 43 million farmer’s households were indebted. Uttar Pradesh accounted for 6.9 million, followed by Andhra Pradesh with 4.9, Maharashtra with 3.6, West Bengal with 3.5 and Madhya Pradesh 3.2.

In total 43.32 million (48.6%) out of 89.35 million farmers were classified indebted. The percentage of farmers in debt was highest in Andhra Pradesh (82%). Percentages of more than fifty plus were recorded in Tamil Nadu (74.5%), Punjab (65.4), Kerala (64.4), Karnataka (61.6) and Maharashtra (54.8). In Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal figures were between 50-53% (Government of India 2005a: 10).

One can also look at farmers’ indebtedness and its distribution across different social groups. The prevalence rate of indebtedness of farmers in different social groups was as followed: 36.3% in scheduled tribes, 50.2% in scheduled castes, 51.4% in other backward castes and 49.9% in others (Government of India 2005a: 11). In other words, indebtedness is not a problem of one particular social group but rather it is spread across social strata. With regard to their source of income cultivators are the most crucial group. Cultivators account for 57% of all farmers (51.1 million out of 89.3 million). 24.8 mil (48%) of these people were indebted (Government of India 2005a: 14).

Another factor is the size of land. This is of particular interest as it gives evidence to the argument that Indian agriculture is dominated by small-scale/marginal agriculture. In total there are 89.3 million households. 29.3 million (32.8%) cultivate 0.01-0.04 ha, whereas 28.4 million (31.7%)

have 0.04-1 ha. If one adds the percentage of those below 0.01 ha (1.4%), 2/3 of all farms are smaller than 1 ha. These households owning between 0.01-0.04 ha are highly indebted. They account for 30% of the total households in debt, followed by those with 0.01-0.04 ha (29.8%). It needs to be emphasized, that the prevalence rate for groups is between 44-66%. It means that in each group close to 50% or even the majority was indebted. In other words, indebtedness concerns each class of farmers (Government of India 2005a: 17).

The report also provides figures in terms of outstanding loans. The figures for average outstanding loans were highest in Punjab, with Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan and Karnataka following (Government of India 2005a: 17). It is revealing to look at the various sources of loan. Interest rates by informal moneylenders are usually high, but these loans are accessible for farmers who are denied a bank loan. In addition, the application process for such a loan is less time consuming and the loan is available quickly. The report states that most of the loans came from “agricultural/professional money-lender”. In average 29 out of 100 households depend on that source. But these numbers should be taken with caution. In some states the figures were significantly higher. In Andhra Pradesh (57%), Tamil Nadu (52%), Bihar (44%), Rajasthan (40%) and Karnataka (34%) the figures were above average. It is striking that among all the Indian households only 3% received government loans (Government of India 2005a: 22). Regarding the distribution of outstanding loans in relation to sources of loan banks were top (36%) with moneylenders being second (26%) (Government of India 2005a: 21).

Since the late 1990s the issue of farmers’ suicides has been a serious matter of concern. In line with indebtedness, it is not a local issue but a systemic issue in Indian agriculture. This becomes obvious, when one looks at the figures. Between 1993 and 2003 112,000 farmers committed suicide (Sainath 2010a: 55). This excludes the suicides of other groups. For example, officially women do not fall into the category of farmer therefore their suicide number is not part of the overall number of farmers’ deaths. After 2003 the number increased dramatically in some areas. In six

districts in Maharashtra, county Vidharbha, the number of suicides in 2006 was 25 times higher than in 2001. In total one could estimate 130.000 suicides (ibid.).

The urgency of the issue is highlighted by figures provided by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), which were presented by the journalist Palagummi Sainath (Sainath 2010b; Sainath 2010c). In 2008 in all of India 16.196 farmers' suicides were recorded. The NCRB estimates that between 1997 and 2008 the number of farmers' suicides rose to 199,132. In 2008 five states — Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, and Chattisgarh — accounted for 10.797 or 66.6% of farmers' suicides all over the country. This was a slight increase compared to 2007 (66.2%). Maharashtra recorded the most suicides with a total of 3802. But Sainath argues, while the all-India total of 16,196 means a decline by 436 compared with 2007, the broad trends of the past decade reflect no significant change. Since 2003 the national average for farmers' suicides has stagnated at roughly one every 30 minutes (Sainath 2010c). Post 2000 the figures did not reflect a positive trend. Between 1997-2002 the top five states (mentioned above) accounted for 55,769 farmer suicides, between 2003-2008 the figure reached 67,054, i.e. a rise of nearly 1900 a year on average (Sainath 2010c). Sainath notes: "All 12 years [1997-2008] were pretty bad, but the latter six were decidedly worse" (Sainath 2010b).

4.2.2. The problem of decreasing growth rates and environmental degradation

Another major issue of the debate has been the so-called economic standstill of agriculture. It is linked to the problem of environmental degradation. Both spheres, the economic and the ecological, are very much interrelated. On the one hand, environmental degradation affects economic output, e. g. a high amount of salt in soil or water reduces productivity significantly. On the other hand, agricultural practices and technological progress itself can be the cause of environmental degradation.

Looking at various indicators one can see why many people talk about a crisis. These indicators in question include growth rates of crop output, land yields, the net sown area and the total

cropped area, inputs and agricultural output and cropping pattern changes. One article by G.S. Bhalla and Gurmail Singh (Bhalla & Singh 2009) analyzes these categories, comparing the post-reform period (1990-93 to 2003-06) with the pre-reform period (1980-83 to 1990-93). In their discussion of agricultural growth they note a strong tendency towards deceleration in all the regions. In the post-reform period output growth was recorded 1.74% in contrast to 3.37%. In their perspective the main reason for this was the deceleration in investment in irrigation and other rural infrastructure (Bhalla & Singh 2009: 36). This tendency coincides with a decrease in yield growth rates. Apart from Gujarat, the yield growth rate dropped significantly (from 3.17% to 1.52%). The authors argue that this is of major concern because yield growth rates represent the predominant source of growth in the post-liberalization period. According to them reasons for the decline are low investment in irrigation and non-availability of yield enhancing technology. The growth of the net sown area at the all-India level has been increased only marginally since the 1970s. In 1970-73 the average net sown area was 139,044 million ha. In 2003-06 it was 141,279 million ha. Between 1990-93 and 2003-06 the area even decreased (Bhalla & Singh 2009: 37). Between 1990-93 and 2003-06 the growth of gross cropped area only accounted for 0.22% pa, with the majority of states around average or even below (Bhalla & Singh 2009: 38). The use of inputs, including tractors, pumpsets and fertilizers, constantly increased. High levels of use of inputs were recorded in the high productivity states of Punjab and Haryana, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Gujarat. This is dangerous, as higher use of inputs imposes a high fiscal burden and may result in soil and environmental degradation (Bhalla & Singh 2009: 39). In the post-reform period the process of diversification stagnated and was marked by a setback in the process of diversification from coarse cereals to oil seeds (Bhalla & Singh 2009: 42). Decline in output of foodgrains did not stop during the period 1990-93 to 2003-06. In total, a significant change in cropping patterns between 1990-2006 could be observed. This included shifts both in term of area location and share in total value of output. It meant a significant

decline in share of area under coarse cereals and an increase in the share of area under higher value crops (Bhalla & Singh 2009: 43).

The issue of environmental degradation, addressed above by Bhalla & Singh, deserves more elaboration. In the recent decades environmental degradation has become a major issue across India. Environmental degradation has reached irreversible levels in some regions of India, in particular in the arid and semi-arid tracts. In addition, replacement costs (enhanced input use, abatement and conservation costs) have increased (Reddy 2003: 4700). A study by Sehgal and Abrol (1994) estimated that about 190 million hectares of the 297,3 million hectares of the total land area in India are degraded (Sehgal & Abrol, cit. by Reddy 2003: 4700). The major trend is even worse. It is estimated that the total sum of degraded land is not simply increasing but increasing at a growing rate (ibid.). Ratna Reddy points out the urgency of the issue, when he explains that sustainable development is impossible if this trend is not stopped (Reddy 2003: 4700f). The problem of land degradation can be observed in particular by looking at crop losses. Problems are most clearly visible in the canal commands, where the problems of salinity and waterlogging are increasing. Land degradation is enhanced by intensive land use, high input use and declining profits. Conservation efforts are neglected due to market distortions, which present disincentives for adoption (Reddy 2003: 4703). In recent decades irrigation from wells was replaced by canal or tank irrigation as the dominant form. This has caused an increased exploitation of groundwater, which resulted in desertification (Reddy 2003: 4705). The author also notes that degradation may not be reflected in yield rates but in increased input use (Reddy 2003: 4705f).

In 1990 the extent of degradation was estimated between 175 million ha and 35 million ha although the lower level may be closer to reality (Reddy 2003: 4706f). 58 million ha, as estimated by the Agro-climatic Regional Planning Unit (ARPU), cover 17.6% of the country as a whole. According to the ARPU land degradation needs to be treated as a serious matter in eight out of 15 agro-climatic zones (Reddy 2003: 4706). Replacement costs due to erosion are estimated

between Rs 98,270 million (1994) and Rs 17,997 million (1988-89) (Reddy 2003: 4707). On the whole estimates for costs of land degradation vary between Rs 448,640 million and Rs 75,183 million in the case of loss of production (Reddy 2003: 4708). The author clearly states that the costs of degradation in Indian agriculture have to be understood as “substantial”. He notes: “Adverse impacts of degradation (like salinity and waterlogging) are already set in though limited to certain pockets” (Reddy 2003: 4712). High levels of degradation were recorded in Sikkim, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh (Reddy 2003: 4711).

Salinity and waterlogging have been a serious concern since the 1980s. Due to faulty management of irrigation water waterlogging and soils salinity have made a significant impact, particularly in arid and semi-arid areas. In the beginning of the 1990s 9.39 million ha were affected by salinity and sodicity, the major part being located in areas of intensive irrigation (Yedla & Peddi 2007: 66). As a result, the total area of salinized soils has increased, for instance in the Indo-gangetic plains. In Haryana rising water levels have been responsible for increased waterlogging, and in the long run, soil salinization. Similar trends have been reported in Punjab. Salinity and alkalinity is linked to an increase in fluoride toxicity. Fluorosis has become an issue of concern in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. In addition, the increased use of saline groundwater has resulted in rising pH values (up to 8.9-9.8), the decline of nutrient availability, plus an unusual soil hardness across various agro-climatic zones (Yedla & Peddi 2007: 67). Water has been a crucial resource for any farming activity, and overexploitation of groundwater is a serious threat. Falling water levels have been recorded in various areas, especially in the irrigated belt of the Indo-gangetic plain and in arid and semi-arid areas. Water levels in Punjab and Haryana have decreased rapidly and were found 15-20 meters below the ground surface. This means water levels are declining almost one meter per year (Yedla & Peddi 2007: 69).

The dilemma is best illustrated in Punjab, a center of the Green Revolution. Waterlogging was significantly reduced thanks to the rapid growth in use of tube wells, which unfortunately caused serious problems with ground water depletion (ibid.). Further issues are an increased rate of water pollution caused by the overuse of nitrogenous fertilizers, and frequent instances of pesticide pollution in Indian fresh waters (Yedla & Peddi 2007: 70). In sum, two crucial resources for farming, soil and water, have shown alarming trends for the future of Indian agriculture .

After reviewing the data, one can easily see why the Indian agriculture since the 1990s has been called a sector in a crisis. This is also reflected by the 10th Five Year Plan (Planning Commission (Government of India) 2002) and 11th Five Year Plan (Planning Commission (Government of India) 2008). The issues addressed above can all be found there: degradation of natural resource base, aggravation in social distress and slowdown in growth (see Planning Commission 2002: chap. 5.1.7. problems; chap. 5.1.35. causes for decelerating growth in the agricultural sector, plus Planning Commission 2008: chap. 1.4. recent trends and concerns). Additional elements include the increased vulnerability to world commodity price volatility following trade liberation, the uneven and slow development of technology, the lack of adequate incentives, increased non-agricultural demand for land and water and appropriate institutions and widening economic disparities between irrigated and rain-fed areas (Planning Commission 2008: 1.4. recent trends and concerns). According to the 10th plan between 1984-85 and 1998-99 the number of dark blocks (blocks which show a substantial impact of degradation) increased from 253 to 428. If this trend is not stopped “the number of exploited blocks will double over a period of twelve and a half years” (Planning Commission 2002: chap. 5.1.11: sustainable development of land and water). The plan underlines the danger of leaving the field to the private sector. It states that rising private investment does not “substitute for lower public investment and deteriorating quality of public services in agriculture” (Planning Commission 2002: chap. 5.1.9: policies of agriculture in the 1990s). According to the 10th plan, 107,4 million ha of the overall geographical area (328.7 million ha) are classified as degraded (Planning Commission 2002: chap. 5.1.12:

environmental degradation). The 10th plan also notes a trend towards fragmentation of holdings. It notes that, due to the increasing population, the fragmentation of holdings has risen to new levels, resulting in smaller and unviable units of land holdings. According to figures in the 10th plan small and marginal holdings account for 78.2% of all holdings and operate 32.4% of the total area (Planning Commission 2002: chap. 5.1.46: fragmentation of holdings). The multitude of the problems shows that it is not a problem bound to a particular place or that the matter can be treated with a few reforms. Agriculture in the 1990s was clearly marked by structural problems.

Since then India has been in a period of transition, whose end is yet unknown. The Green Revolution has turned “black and gray” (Planning Commission 2002: chap. 5.1.60: overexploitation of ground water). Agriculture has been under great stress, and the challenges are far from being met. So what will come next? Can there be and/or should there be a new Green Revolution?

4.2.3. The Evergreen Revolution

The term “Evergreen Revolution” emerged in 1990 and was used for the first time by Monkombu Sambasivan Swaminathan (Swaminathan 2006: 2293). Swaminathan became famous as one of its great promoters. He worked as an IARI scientist, was director of the ICAR, member of the Indian Planning Commission and Director General of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) (Seshia & Scoones 2003: 13), founder of the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation in 1988, furthermore he also holds the UNESCO Chair in Ecotechnology. In his view the Evergreen Revolution was formulated as an attempt for stimulating the development of new technologies “that can help to increase productivity in perpetuity without associated ecological harm” (Swaminathan 2006: 2293). From a technological perspective the Evergreen Revolution relies upon a systems approach and includes farmers’ participation and knowledge management (ibid.). Swaminathan does not regard the necessity of productivity enhancement as a matter of discussion: “Productivity enhancement is the only pathway available to us to produce more to feed the growing population” (ibid.). This is because more and more food is produced on a soil, which shows all the negative trends described above (ibid.). Swaminathan explicitly highlights so

called “frontier technologies” including biotechnology and information technology, although he admits that traditional ecological prudence and wisdom should be part of the Evergreen Revolution (Swaminathan 2006: 2293f). More precisely, “the Evergreen revolution is another term for sustainable agriculture and is based on tools developed by blending traditional ecological prudence and frontier technologies” (Swaminathan 2006: 2294). He demands that new technologies should not only be economically viable, “but also environmentally and socially sustainable” (ibid.). One condition for this to happen is a “paradigm shift in research strategies from a commodity-centered approach to an integrated natural resources management procedure covering the entire cropping system” (ibid.). This includes crop-livestock integrated farming, soil restoration and enhancement, water conservation and sustainable use (Swaminathan 2006: 2294f).

In the early 2000s it was predicted that global demand for wheat would increase by 40% by 2020. 67% of all wheat consumption was estimated to take place in developing countries (Swaminathan 2006: 2295). Swaminathan cites figures according to which 92% of the additional cereal production in developing countries was due to yield increases. Again the same line of argument is applied: “There is no option except to produce more from less per capita land and water resources” (ibid.).

The latest period in attempts to increase yields started in 1980 and ended in 2000, during the transition from Mendelian to molecular breeding. This refers to the processes of large-scale commercialization of hybrid wheat. Here the use of genetic-cytoplasmic male sterility and of chemical hybridizing agents has been most prominent (Swaminathan 2006: 2298). A similar increase for rice has been estimated.

Swaminathan explains the goals of the Evergreen Revolution as follows:

(a) Bridging the yield gap: This refers to a better adaptation in local environments, improved provision of nutrients and water, and a better control of pesticides, parasites and weeds (Swaminathan 2006: 2300).

(b) Defending the gains already achieved: The “need for stepping up maintenance research” in order to avoid crop losses and the introduction of invasive alien species is emphasized. This includes water harvesting, watershed development and economic and efficient water use (ibid.).

(c) Extending the gains: Here a focus is on rainfed and semiarid regions, hill and island areas, which are supposed to be “bypassed by modern yield enhancement technologies”. Swaminathan discusses bottlenecks stemming from low availability of assured irrigation and missing assured and remunerative marketing options. A focus on farming system and dry farming is recommended (ibid.).

(d) Making new gains: Farming system intensification, diversification, and value-addition are seen as crucial. This includes “appropriate institutional structures that can provide key centralized services to small and marginal farm families and to provide them with the power of scale in eco-farming” (Swaminathan 2006: 2301).

Photosynthetic efficiency improvement, precision farming and small farm management are formulated as the key elements of a green revolution. The goal is to modify “plant architecture for better light interception and [to] assimilate partitioning and utilization of solar energy more efficiently” (ibid.). In order to fight current food insecurity one has to implement “a systematic effort in each agro-climatic zone to identify and remove the constraints for the prevailing yield gaps” (ibid.). Precision farming rests upon “a responsive, field specific management approach”. It makes use of information technology in order to “monitor crop growth and N [nutrient] status and pest pressure to precisely identify when N top dressing, insecticide, or fungicide applications are required” (ibid.). It includes access to predictions of growth stage, crop stage, and yield potential from crop simulation models that use real-time weather-data and weather projections” (Swaminathan 2006: 2302). It draws heavily on complex and advanced science methodology. “A precise match of genotype to environment is needed while utilizing field-specific tactics to ensure that input requirements are met without deficiency or excess in time and space” (Swaminathan 2006: 2301). Small farm management highlights the importance of institutional structures in or-

der to spread “the advantages of scale at both the production and postharvest phases of agriculture” (Swaminathan 2006: 2302). It refers to (a) soil health and fertility management, (b) water management, (c) integrated plant health management, (d) energy management, and (e) postharvest management (ibid.).

Swaminathan defined some areas for further research: (a) integrated gene management, (b) higher factor productivity, with particular reference to water and nutrients, (c) precision farming and development of the biological software essential for sustainable agriculture, (d) bioorganic agriculture combining relevant features of organic farming and biotechnology, (e) biomass utilization for adding economic value to every part of the biomass and (f) knowledge connectivity via internet in rural knowledge centers (ibid.).

4.3. Towards a new era: The emergence of a transnational agricultural space

Undoubtedly, the question of agricultural change after the Green Revolution is far from being finished. Govindasamy Agoramoorthy (Agoramoorthy 2008) gives a good account of this. According to his short essay, 68% of the workforce relied on farming in 2007. In addition, the following year saw grain production peak at 200 million tons, 10 million below the requirement. According to Agoramoorthy’s perspective, agricultural diversification and technical innovation are essential for increasing the amount of cultivated land, which currently is stuck at about 120 million ha. In order change the “bleak” condition of Indian agriculture, significant measures need to be taken (Agoramoorthy 2008: 504). In 2020, he claims that productivity needs to be above 340 million tons in order to catch up with population growth. Agoramoorthy refers to the Living Planet Report, which states by 2050 humanity will seek for resources at double the rate at which the earth can generate them. He argues for the transformation of drylands in order to eliminate overshoot of bio-productive areas. This includes building cost-effective check dams and lift-irrigation systems in order to increase productivity of agricultural crops (Agoramoorthy 2008: 505). By doing that, he asks for a vital contribution to achieve a new sustainable Green Revolution in the globalized economy supported by advanced technology (Agoramoorthy 2008: 506).

While some elements of continuity from the Green Revolution persist – neo-Malthusian scenarios and associated narratives of technology and expertise (Seshia & Scoones 2003: 11; 13) – the conditions under which agricultural change is currently taking place are very different from the Green Revolution. Sally Brooks summarizes the changes and continuities by organizing them into the following categories: (a) high levels of uncertainty and risk surrounding transgenic technologies, new issues such as biosafety; (b) ownership and control: from public sector to private sector; (c) international context: from cold war and national food self-sufficiency to neoliberal globalization and competitive exports; and (d) a wider range of actors influencing and contesting policy (Brooks 2005: 362). New issues are mounting, such as intellectual property rights and biosafety; trade regulations have become crucial to peasant survival. For instance, the EU moratorium on GM crops directly affects farmers because Europe is still a major market for agricultural choice. In other words, decisions in Europe directly influence the Indian farmers' decisions on what to plant (Brooks 2005: 361). Due to the introduction of new issues into agricultural politics, agriculture is no longer mainly defined by domestic agricultural offices and planning institutions. It cuts across domestic and international institutions for health, environment and finance. What is at stake is not only the right way of agriculture, but fundamental questions about re-defining democracy, the relationship between nature and society, the public accountability of science and the question of sustainability as a guiding principle (Brooks 2005: 373). Biotechnology in particular addresses issues such as questions of moral choice over the manipulation of nature, rights and control over local resources in the face of multicultural corporate domination, global environmental issues such as the future of agrobiodiversity and international economic relations and the role of trade liberalization as a route to local economic development (Seshia & Scoones 2003: 19). At the same time, new options for resistance emerge. Compared to the Green Revolution, the current discussion is “far wider and more contested” (Seshia & Scoones 2003: 23). In regard to GM crops Brooks note: “The network promoting GM crops today is at the same time extended (globally and to additional sectors) and less durable, more vulnerable to challenge” (Brooks 2005:

371). Local factors still matter. This is because most food is still consumed near to where it is produced (Horlings & Marsden 2011: 443). But nowadays it is embedded in a significantly different space as compared with the Green Revolution. Questions of agricultural change are no longer primarily embedded in a domestic space but are embedded in international discourses on justice, environment, finance and trade framed by local, domestic, national, international, and transnational actors and institutions.

To sum up, chapter four outlined agricultural change in India since the 1990s. The most crucial aspect was the integration of domestic agriculture into a global commodity market. At the same time the topic of an Indian agricultural crisis became a major issue. I highlighted indebtedness, suicides and the decrease of economic growth figures as structural problems of Indian agriculture since the 1990s. The environmental damage due to e. g. groundwater exploitation and overuse of chemical inputs has become a generally acknowledged problem. The Evergreen Revolution addresses this issue and argues for an even more intensified technological approach. Information technology and biotechnology play a crucial part in this proposal.

I argue that the process of transformation of agriculture, which began in the early 1990s, is far from being finished. There is great uncertainty about the right strategy. The Evergreen Revolution is one of many frameworks which were proposed, such as a double-green revolution, a blue revolution or an African green revolution (Horlings & Marsden 2011: 441). These concepts aim at reversing the negative consequences of the first Green Revolution by applying an even more sophisticated technological approach. The increase of production is presented as the only way forward. But is this really the case? Is not the belief in a technological solution itself the core of the problem? At this point the question of agency becomes relevant. More precise, who is the crucial agent of agricultural change? What is the position of the peasant in all of this?

5. The entity of the peasant and its place in a transnational agricultural space

The question of agency is a central issue of Subaltern Studies, Post-Development and Food Sovereignty. What is at stake is the ability of the individual to act independently and to become a sovereign of his/her own rights. In all these three theories the peasant is presented as an active agent who is capable of resisting to a hegemonic order. In these discourses the power of institutions is confronted with the peasant as an autonomous entity. In contradiction to their own claims, I will ask if peasant essentialism is implied within these discourses.

5.1. Discourse 1: Subaltern Studies

The first edition of Subaltern Studies was published in 1982. Ranajit Guha, a historian of India teaching at the University of Sussex, headed the project (Chakrabarty 2000: 9). As early as 1974 JPS printed an essay by Guha on the 1860 peasant uprising, entitled “Neel-Darpan: The Image of a Peasant Revolt in a Liberal Mirror” (Guha 1974). In fact, the JPS and the Subaltern Studies were closely connected to each other, and arguments brought forwards in one were often referenced in the other. In 2005 the twelfth and final volume was published.

The Subaltern Studies project is linked to the emergence of postcolonial studies as a major focus of research within social sciences. According to Gyan Prakash, postcolonial critique “seeks to undo the Eurocentrism produced by the institution of the West’s trajectory, its appropriation of the other as History[sic!]” (Prakash 1994: 1475). According to Dipesh Chakrabarty postcolonial history should be understood as a “post-nationalist form of historiography” (Chakrabarty 2000: 22). Questions of communalism, nationalism, colonialism and the relationships between these elements formed the backbone of the attempt to formulate a modern Indian historiography (Jabbar 2009).

The term “subaltern” was inspired by the works of Antonio Gramsci. Here the term is used to refer to “subordinate social groups or classes that were subject to the actions and policies of the

dominant classes, even when they rebelled” (Persram 2010: 10). This includes slaves, peasants, religious groups, women, racial groups, and the proletariat. According to Gramsci the focal points were the sociopolitical relationships and conditions of emergence of the subaltern. He studied their political power as well as the nature of representation in literature and history (Persram 2010: 10).

In the preface to the first edition of “Subaltern Studies” Guha refers to “subaltern” as to those of “inferior rank” (Guha 2010: Preface). “Subaltern Studies” focuses on subordination in South Asian society expressed in class, caste, age, gender, and office. In that perspective “subaltern functions both as a measure of objective assessment of the role of the elite and as a critique of elitist interpretations of that role” (ibid.). Guha rejected “elitist historiography”, arguing that it does not “acknowledge, far less interpret, the contribution made by people on their own, that is, independently of the elite to the making and development of this nationalism” (Guha 2010: 3).

The emergence of Subaltern Studies took place, when a growing number of Indian historians challenged the idea that British rule was beneficial to the Indian subcontinent. They argued that, on the contrary, colonialism had distorting effects on economic and cultural developments in India. From their perspective, modernity and nationalist desire for political unity were fruits of struggles undertaken by Indians themselves rather than British gifts (Chakrabarty 2000: 12). Soon two extreme positions emerged: on the one hand, the position taken by scholars from Cambridge, arguing that nationalism was an achievement of the upper class. On the other hand, the position taken by Bipan Chandra, who argued that Indian history of the colonial period had to be seen as an epic battle between the forces of nationalism and colonialism. Research in the 1970s questioned both perspectives, proving that relations within the national movement were far more repressive and fragile than previously thought (Chakrabarty 2000: 13).

Scholars of Subaltern Studies rejected both notions, claiming that these perspectives overlooked the contributions made by individuals and movements outside elite circles. Subaltern Studies aimed at a reformulation of historiography. It is to be understood as “part of an attempt to align

historical reasoning with larger movements for democracy in India” (Chakrabarty 2000: 14). It prioritized an anti-elitist approach to historiography and reintroduced the past of subordinate groups (ibid.). Its goal was to formulate a historical analysis in which the subaltern groups feature as subjects of history.

According to Chakrabarty, Subaltern Studies’ historiography is special for three reasons: first, it separates history of power from any universalist history of capital. Second, it is a critique of the nation-form. Third, it questions the relationship between power and knowledge (Chakrabarty 2000: 15). Furthermore, Guha reevaluated “the political”. From his perspective, there was a need to separate the politics of the people from the politics of the elite. The main difference concerns the different character of mobilization. Elite politics is marked by vertical mobilization and oriented more towards legalistic and constitutional notions. Subaltern politics, in contrast, relies on horizontal affiliations, e. g. kinship, territory, class consciousness, and is driven by resistance to elite domination (Chakrabarty 2000: 15f). Guha rejected the concept of the “pre-political” as a level of consciousness that is uncomfortable with the institutional logic of modernity or capitalism. Arguing against the characterization of peasant consciousness as pre-political, he proposed a notion of the “political” extending beyond the territories assigned to it in European political thought (Chakrabarty 2000: 16). According to Chakrabarty, Guha regarded the peasant as a critical building-block of colonialism and as a fundamental part of the modernity which emerged with colonial rule in India (Chakrabarty 2000: 17).

According to Chakrabarty, what is crucial for understanding the political thought of Guha, is the concept of the double logic of hierarchy and oppression. One was built on the quasi-liberal legal and institutional frameworks which arrived with the British, while the other was built upon direct and explicit domination and subordination of the less powerful using ideological-symbolic means and physical force (ibid.). According to Guha the cultural history of power in India cannot be reduced simply to an application of the analytics of nationalism available to Western Marxism. His stance rejected the narrative that regressive colonialism was opposed by a robust nationalist

movement and attempted to spread a bourgeois outlook. Rather he argued that one had to understand the resistance to colonialism in the context of the political domain which was marked by the secular languages of law and the constitutional frameworks which coexist and interact with strategies of domination and subordination (Chakrabarty 2000: 21).

With this perspective, a paradigm change took place. History itself could no longer be understood as national history, with nationalist leaders guiding the nation towards a better future. History could no longer be seen as a linear movement from “pre-capitalist” to “bourgeois modernity”, with artifacts of democracy, citizens’ rights, a market economy and the rule of law as the logical outcomes. Furthermore, any clear-cut definition of nation became obsolete. The picture that emerged, was marked by fragmentation and by various multiple systems of power, continually shifting between the different logics of dominance and subordination. Instead of looking for a unitary “nation”, the focus shifted to “how and through what practices an official nationalism that claimed to represent such a unitary nation emerged” (Chakrabarty 2000: 22).

According to Prakash the impact of Subaltern Studies was evident when the second volume was published. He points to Guha’s essay titled “The Prose of Counter-Insurgency”. In this essay, Guha rejects the notion of external influence as the major driver in peasant rebellion. He criticizes the assumption that peasant rebellions occur without reason, or to put it differently, without “the logic of consciousness” (Prakash 1994: 1478). Guha differentiates between types of discourse. The primary discourse is the immediate accounts of insurgency produced by officials. The second discourse is the material of the primary discourse, translated into another time and narrative by official reports and memoirs. The third discourse takes place, when historians incorporate and redistribute the secondary discourse. These historians have no official affiliation and are widely set apart from the time of the event. The danger is that historians may end up incorporating the counter-insurgent secondary discourse, taking over the bias of colonial officials who ignore the insurgents’ agency. They might be trapped into “refusing to acknowledge the subjectivity and agency of the insurgent” (Prakash 1994: 1479). Readers were asked to take a critical stand

and to develop a conscious strategy for reading archival documents, in order to be able to trace the way, in which elite modes of thought represented the figure of the subaltern and their practices (Chakrabarty 2000: 23). In Prakash's view the value of Subaltern Studies is their insistence on the rediscovery of subaltern myth, cults, ideologies, and revolts. From his perspective, colonialist and elitist descriptions attempted to take away these elements by appropriation, while conventional historiography reduced the issue of peasant rebellion to the question of cause and effect (ibid.). It is important that the subaltern themselves there can never enjoy full autonomy. Subalternity always includes the failure of subaltern agency. Furthermore, colonial subalternity, Prakash argues, was perceived by the representatives of the Subaltern Studies not just as a form of "general" subalternity. Because the conditions of subalternity were irreconcilably different from those conditions of other social entities, Subaltern Studies had to attempt more than an Indian version of the "history from below" approach – it had to see the subaltern differently and produce different histories (Prakash 1994: 1480).

With regard to the further evolution of Subaltern Studies Prakash notes two different tendencies. The dominant motivation, which guided research at the beginning, was the recovery of the subaltern as a subject outside of elite discourse. From his perspective, since Subaltern Studies III, the focus had shifted to the analysis of subalternity as an effect of discursive systems. Subsequently, he argues, subalternity had emerged as "a position of critique, as a recalcitrant difference that arises not outside but inside elite discourses to exert pressure on forces and forms that subordinate it" (Prakash 1994: 1481). The main motivation is no longer to establish the presence of the subaltern as subjects of their own history but to show the operation of dominance, which confronts, constitutes, and subordinates forms of culture and politics (ibid.). This did not mean losing sight of subalterns and subalternity but locating subaltern and subalternity at "its interstices [in the grey between the discourse and the operation of power], subordinated by structures over which they exert pressure" (Prakash 1994: 1482).

What is important to underline, is the double character of subalternity and power. The dominant discourse is incomplete without the subalterns, which are reproduced in subterfuge and stereotype. In other words, the peasant is mentioned but in a particular frame and with a particular intention. The appropriation of subalternity in a specific manner is important for the functioning of power. From Prakash's perspective, one needs to look at the process of fragmentation of the record of subalternity. This process is marked by the "necessary failure of subalterns to come into their own and the pressure they exerted on discursive systems that, in turn provoked their suppression and fragmentation" (Prakash 1994: 1483).

Another issue, which emerged with Subaltern Studies, is the criticism of the modern West. It is a critique primarily of the modes of knowledge which it instituted. It goes beyond the colonial records of exploitation and targets the disciplinary knowledge and procedures which the elites authorized. In the end a critique of the discipline of history was formulated (ibid.). What was debated, among other things, was the universalism of historical thinking. The assumption, setting aside other histories due to their "mythical-religious" character, that only the European tradition of historical thinking provides "absolute insights" was rejected. What was rejected was a description of history outside "Europe" in which "all other histories are matters of empirical research that fleshes out a theoretical skeleton which is substantially 'Europe'" (Chakrabarty 1992: 3). Chakrabarty criticizes that non-European histories are represented in a "mimetic" way. Thus non-European history is depicted as a mimicry of certain "modern" subjects of "European" history, which he saw as "a sad figure of lack and failure" (Chakrabarty 2000: 18).

In the late 1980s substantial criticism of Subaltern Studies emerged. This is summarized by Partha Chatterjee (Chatterjee 2010: 81). Scholars questioned the assumption that a crucial element of subalternity was an autonomous subaltern consciousness. They doubted the historicity of the claimed subaltern consciousness and its position in structures of subordination and domination. Others directed their criticism at the "historical subject". What was overlooked, critics claimed, was the fact that subaltern were drawn into the nexus of state politics. A clear separation of inside

and outside with regard to the movements of subaltern in state politics could no longer be upheld. Rather, subaltern consciousness had to be seen as a hybrid which reflects the expression of both the suppressed and the oppressor. The perspective widened to include the nature of subaltern consciousness as a product of everyday suppression (ibid.).

Another important critique was formulated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in her 1988 essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” In this essay Spivak argues for a critical rethinking of the position of the intellectual speaking on behalf of the subaltern. Furthermore, she introduces a gender perspective, which highlights the role of the women, and emphasizes women as autonomous subjects speaking for themselves (Spivak 1988). The essay was an attempt to formulate “a critique of Western efforts to problematize the subject” and tackle the “question of how the third-world subject is represented within the Western discourse” (Spivak 1988: 271). She focuses on the position of the intellectual when revisiting the contributions of Foucault and Deleuze. While highlighting the gains of poststructuralist thinking – the heterogeneous nature of networks of power, desire and interest and the emphasis by intellectuals to uncover the discourse of society’s other – she criticizes both thinkers for neglecting the question of ideology and their own influence on intellectual history (Spivak 1988: 272). She subscribes to Edward Said’s critique of Foucault. Said criticized the idea that power was captivating and mystifying. Spivak adds the notion of the critic’s institutional responsibility (Spivak 1988: 280).

Another aspect of Spivak’s critique refers to the representation of women. She claims that the subaltern female is doubly punished within the context of colonialism. The ideological construction of gender maintains a male dominance, both as an object of colonialist historiography and as a subject of insurgency (Spivak 1988: 287). She argues against a simple inclusion of subalternists. The inclusion has to be more than just “constructing a homogenous Other referring only to our own place in the seat of the Same or the Self?” (Spivak 1988: 288). In her perspective the focus should be placed on sustaining and developing mechanics of the constitution of the Other [sic!] rather than innovations of the authenticity of the Other [sic!] (Spivak 1988: 294).

In sum, the approach towards the entity of the peasant in Subaltern Studies is based on criticism of a particular presentation and formulation of history as produced by colonial records and elitist historians. In Subaltern Studies the question of a distinct peasant consciousness is a central marker. Substantial criticism towards Subaltern Studies emerged at the end of the 1980s. The question of a hidden essentialism played a major role. The position of the subaltern as a social entity substantially differing from the elite was criticized. Subaltern Studies highlighted the link between text and power. It was noticed that the subaltern could not speak in official documents. The question of representation as expressed in official documents is also a key aspect of the post-development discourse. Here it is not only the colonial archive but the development practice and its documents which are questioned.

5.2. Discourse 2: Post-development

5.2.1. The idea of post-development, the peasant and the critique of post-development

In the late 1980s/1990s there emerged a very critical perspective on the notion of development labeled “post-development”. The term appeared for the first time in 1991 as a conference title. (Rahnema 1998a: xix). Post-development discourse is closely linked to the rise of post-structuralist critique in social sciences. From the 1980s onwards critical discussions about development as a cultural discourse have spread, looking at, “why, through what historical processes, and with what consequences Asia, Africa, and Latin America came to be ‘invented’ as the ‘third world’ through discourses and practices of development” (Escobar 2007: 19). The connection between agriculture and development needs to be highlighted. According to Gupta agriculture is at the core of the development discourse. He states: “Underdevelopment afflicts those nation-states in which a high percentage of the national product comes from agriculture and where a high percentage of the labor is employed on farms” (Gupta 1998: 104). As a consequence, leaving the state of agriculture, the faster the better, emerges as the “most desirable goal for a modern nation”. These desires are formulated within plans to “modernize” or “develop” the agricultural sector by appropriate doses of capital and technology (ibid.)

One central motive for this was to highlight the ambiguity of the word and to introduce a critique of development. This involved the rejection of a particular perception of development – as something which could/should not be questioned. According to Wolfgang Sachs development is a “particular cast of mind, [a] perception which models reality, a myth which confronts society, and a fantasy which unleashes passions” (Sachs 2010: xvi). According to Ferguson development represents the “dominant problematic or interpretive grid through which the impoverished regions of the world are known to us. It is a lens through which “a host of everyday observations are rendered intelligible and meaningful” (Ferguson 1990: xiv).

According to Esteva the term “development” is highly problematic because it is imprecise yet powerful. Looking at the etymology of the term, Esteva concludes that the numerous attempts to transform the word have not succeeded in creating greater clarity. According to Esteva the contours of development have “those of amoeba”. Or, to put it differently, “it [development] is now a mere algorithm whose significance depends on the context in which it is employed” (Esteva 2010: 6). Development represents “an evocation of a net of significances in which the person who uses it is irremediably trapped” (Esteva 2010: 6). More precise, development is linked to a particular intention: “It implies a favorable change, a step from the simple to the complex, from the inferior to the superior, from worse to better” (ibid.). It is a term, which “indicates that one is doing well because one is advancing in the sense of a necessary, ineluctable, universal law and towards a desirable goal” (ibid.). But, Esteva argues, development is far from being neutral. It is Eurocentric and hegemonic. Development functions as a comparative “whose base of support is the assumption, very Western but unacceptable and undemonstrable, of the oneness, homogeneity and linear evolution of the world” (Esteva 2010: 7f). Development secured “global hegemony to a purely Western genealogy of history” denying people the ability “to define the forms of their social life” (Esteva 2010: 5). History was thus transformed into a program, understood in the sense of “a necessary and inevitable destiny” (Esteva 2010: 4). Development creates a particular image by simplification and neglect of complexity. In sum, “it displays a falsification of reality

produced through dismembering the totality of interconnected processes that make up the world's reality and, in its place, it substitutes one of its fragments, isolated from the rest, as a general point of reference" (Esteva 2010: 8). In the end, development allows "intervention to be sanctified in the name of a higher goal" (Sachs 2010: xvi). At the same time people have developed a dependency on development. This dependency becomes self-perpetuating, as development "systematically dispossesses the excluded one from their means of subsistence" (Rahnema 1998b: 391).

James Ferguson sees development as an "anti-politics machine". He argues that here the "double instrument effect" of development can be observed: It refers to the institutional effect of extending bureaucratic state power as well as the conceptual or ideological effect of depoliticizing both poverty and the state (Ferguson 1990: 256). Ferguson argues that even if development projects fail, they never are without an effect. In fact, the failure itself may be less important; what matters in development projects are the "side-effects"/"instrument effects". In other words, the claims for development mark "a point of entry for an intervention of a very different character" (Ferguson 1990: 255). Finally, "a 'development' project can end up performing extremely sensitive political operations involving the entrenchment and expansion of institutional state power almost invisibly, under cover of a neutral, technical mission to which no one can object" (Ferguson 1990: 256).

The "age of development" was introduced on 20th January 1949, when President Truman delivered his inaugural address. From a post-development perspective, the Truman speech had two major consequences: It introduced "underdevelopment" and established economics as the dominant discourse in development.

With the Truman speech the science of economics was given a new lease of life: "What Truman succeeded in doing was freeing the economic sphere from the negative connotations it had accumulated for two centuries, delinking development from colonialism" (Esteva 2010: 14). It was then that economic growth became the prime modus of development (Esteva 2010: 8). Esteva

strongly rejects economics because of its exclusive character. He argues that as a conceptual construction “economics strives to subordinate to its rule and to subsume under its logic every form of social interaction in every society it invades” (Esteva 2010: 14).

“Underdevelopment” emerged as a “new perception of one’s self and of the other” (Esteva 2010: 2). Development was presented as the solution to underdevelopment. In other words, “since then [1949], development has connoted at least one thing: to escape from the undignified condition called underdevelopment” (Esteva 2010: 2). Esteva argues, individuals in the third world began to define themselves as underdeveloped, thereby accepting the negative connotations which come with “underdevelopment”. It was then that the search for “explanations” of the phenomenon, for its material and historical courses began (Esteva 2010: 7). Here a “phenomenon” became a “fact”: Development was perceived as “something real concrete, quantifiable and identifiable: a phenomenon whose origin and modalities can be the subject of investigation” (Esteva 2010: 7).

Processes of decolonization after World War II, the creation of new nation-states, and the uncertainties of how such states would fit into international relations provided a terrain for inquiry. In the post-WW II world through education and ties to the development apparatus intellectuals and political elites formed a world-wide community, based upon processes of classifying, analyzing and reforming indigenous social institutions. In the end here the generic categories of “backward”, “village”, or “bush” were applied (Packard & Cooper 1997: 9). In other words, once Western experts and politicians perceived certain conditions in Asia, Africa, and Latin America as a problem – “poverty” and “backwardness” – “a new domain of thought and experience, namely development, came into being, resulting in a new strategy for dealing with the alleged problems ” (Escobar 1995: 6). A new international community of expertise was established, thanks to the creation of graduate programs in development economics, the founding of journals, the holding of conferences and the recruitment of economists into national bureaucracies and international organizations (Packard & Cooper 1997: 14). It is here that new disciplines, such as demography,

emerged (Packard & Cooper 1997: 15). Packard and Cooper argue that, while scientific disciplines have attempted to solve the puzzle of social change, evolutionism still matters. Here evolutionism is understood as “a desire to make ‘traditional’ people something else” (Packard & Cooper 1997: 18). As they argue, “the flip side of the new person being created was the categorization of the person who had not made the transition [...] – generic categories that collapsed the variety and complexity of life in particular locations into a single world” (ibid.). In the end, the establishment of development meant the establishment of “a discourse of Western origin that operated as a powerful mechanism for the cultural, social and economic production of the third world” (Escobar 2007: 19). According to Majid Rahnema, it challenged and attempted to demolish the very foundations of social life in these countries. More precisely, “the virtues of simplicity and conviviality, of noble forms of poverty, of the wisdom of relying on each other, and of the arts of suffering were derided as signs of ‘underdevelopment’” (Rahnema 1998a: x). These people were no longer “in a position to address the complexities of the modern world without a sustained program of development”. In addition, “the only way for their people to re-emerge as dignified human beings was to prepare them for all the sacrifices necessary to ‘catch up with the West’” (Rahnema 1998b: 378).

According to Escobar development has to be defined as:

“a historically singular experience, the domain of thought and action, [to be understood] by analyzing the characteristics and interrelations of the three axes that define it: the forms of knowledge that refer to it and through which it comes into being and is elaborated into objects, concepts, theories, and the like; the system of power that regulates its practice; and the forms of subjectivity fostered by this discourse, those through which people come to recognize themselves as developed or underdeveloped” (Escobar 1995: 10).

The ensemble of forms found along these axes set up development as a discursive formation, which then emerges as “an efficient apparatus that systematically relates forms of knowledge and techniques of power” (ibid.). In sum, through the emergence of expert knowledge and fields of research to deal with every aspect of “under-development” and the institutionalization of development through the establishment of a network of organization practice and knowledge became linked through particular projects and interventions (Escobar 2007: 19f). It privileged a certain set of knowledge, voices and concern while neglecting others, in particularly the knowledge of those

who were targeted by development: the poor of Asia, Africa and Latin America (Escobar 2007: 20). This apparatus manifested itself as “a real and effective social force, transforming the economic, social, cultural and political reality of the societies in question” (Escobar 2007: 19). A new “regime of order and truth” was established. This regime formulates an “objectivist and empiricist stand” according to which the Third World and its people are defined by theories and intervened upon from the outside (Escobar 1995: 8).

Escobar states that development needs to be understood as “a set of relations among these elements [e. g. technology, monetary and fiscal policies], institutions [e. g. national planning agencies, technical agencies of various kinds], practices and of the systematization of these relations to form a whole” (Escobar 1995: 40). The crucial mechanism through which development took shape was “the way in which, thanks to these relations, it was able to form systematically the objects of which it spoke, to group them and arrange them in certain ways, and to give them a unity of their own” (ibid.). Escobar goes on to point out that in order to get grip on development one needs to look “not at the elements themselves but at the system of relations established among them” (ibid.).

The nature of development is summed up by Escobar in the following way:

“In sum, the system of relations establishes a discursive practice that sets the rules of the game: who can speak, from what points of view, with what authority, and according to what criteria of expertise: it sets the rules that must be followed for this or that problem, or object to emerge and be named, analyzed, and eventually transformed into a policy or a plan” (Escobar 1995: 41).

According to Escobar, the decisive element within post-World War II development discourse was “the systematization of relations”. It was this systematization, which “conferred upon development its great dynamic quality: its immanent adaptability to changing conditions, which allowed it to survive, indeed to thrive, up to the present” (Escobar 1995: 44). This systematization was implemented “by the formation of a vast number of objects and strategies” and manifested itself “by the systematic inclusion of new objects under its domain” (ibid.). In this discourse people and cultures have been reduced to “abstract concepts, statistical figures to be moved up and down in the charts of ‘progress’” (ibid.). While it has failed to solve the basic

problems of underdevelopment, “it has succeeded well in creating a type of underdevelopment that has been, for the most part, politically and technically manageable” (Escobar 1995: 47). Precisely because of this dynamic, shifts and changes in development policy are not understood as a challenge to development, because these shifts and changes do not question the institution itself and never leave a particular discursive space. In other words, the initial assumptions and the logic remains the same (Escobar 1995: 42).

Escobar concludes, “development fostered a way of conceiving social life as a technical problem, as a matter of rational decision and management to be entrusted to that group of people – the development professionals – whose specialized knowledge allegedly qualified them for the task” (Escobar 1995: 52). At the same time, development is marked by a particular “dual nature”: Here development is characterized by simultaneously demanding perpetual recognition and disavowal of difference. While development discourse demands reform, it reproduces constant separation between reformers and those to be reformed. This is achieved by framing the Third World as “different and inferior, as having a limited humanity in relation to the accomplished European” (Escobar 1995: 54).

According to Escobar, the rights of the peasant and the development apparatus cannot be separated from each other. This is because “the inclusion of the peasantry was the first instance in which a new client group was created en masse for the apparatus, in which the economizing and technological gaze of the apparatus was turned on a new subject” (Escobar 1995: 155). Escobar argues that it was in the aftermath of WW II that a “new scopic regime”, an “objectifying regime of visibility”, reconfigured the way in which particular social groups, including peasants, were judged. It was then that peasants were transformed into the “spectacle” (ibid.). This “spectacle” not only attempted to discipline but to fundamentally alter the conditions. It meant “to transform the conditions under which they live into a productive, normalized social environment: in short, to create modernity” (Escobar 1995: 156). According to Escobar the crucial term in this respect is productivity. He argues that before the discovery of the productive potential of the peasant, the

entity was presented in development discourse as a “somewhat bothersome und undifferentiated mass with an invisible face, [...] part of an amorphous ‘surplus population’” doomed to vanish thanks to a growing urban economy (Escobar 1995: 157). Only when land flight coupled with deficiency in rural food production a new approach was taken. It was then that the strategy of integrated rural development (IRD) was introduced (ibid.). This strategy promoted the “rational” peasant, the one who would optimize his/her options, minimize risks and utilize resources efficiently. Accordingly this persona was incorporated into rural development strategies. Here, the “failure of farmers to behave as theory predicted” was assumed to be linked to “the peasants’ inability to respond adequately to the program inputs”. In the end, Escobar argues, integrated rural development was nothing else than a way of bringing the Green Revolution to small farmers (Escobar 1995: 158). Here the new desires, for instance for greater material welfare, were depicted as the desires of people themselves, who were in need of the guidance of the “white father” (ibid.). This perception disregarded everything outside the market, for instance activities of subsistence, local reciprocity and exchange and applied a universal definition of progress, not defined by culture and history (Escobar 1995: 159). But he argues, the Green Revolution was far away from being neutral. Referring to the scholarly literature about the Green Revolution, he notes, that “it is full of cultural assumptions regarding science progress, and the economy, in which one can discern the authorial stances of a father/savior talking with selfless condescension to the child/native” (ibid.). In addition, several tags are repeated, such as “population monster”, the “specter of hunger”, and “political upheaval” (ibid.). Looking at the IRD papers Escobar argues that here central characteristics of the development discourse can be seen. Physicalist and probabilistic discourses are applied, based on an instrumental conception of nature and work; goals are set according to statistical calculations without reference to actual social conditions; one single model is deployed, ignoring any historical specificity (Escobar 1995: 160).

According to Escobar, after Robert McNamara became president of the World Bank in the 1970s the latter's policy papers of the World Bank assume an essentialist description of the peasant:

“Peasants were seen in purely economic terms, as ‘seeking a livelihood in the rural areas,’ not as trying to make viable a whole way of life. They were talked about as a group whose ‘rate of transfer’ into ‘more rewarding activities’ had to be accelerated, pretty much in the same way as cows are moved from low-productivity ranches to tightly packed commercial livestock farms where they are fed concentrates. Their ‘labor’ had to be ‘mobilized’ if they were to be taken out of their poverty – as if subsistence, ‘low-productivity’ farming did not involve labor. Having too many babies naturally was a curse they imposed upon themselves” (Escobar 1995: 162).

In the end, Escobar argues, the rural development discourse is not innovative at all. It is quite the opposite, because it “repeats the same relations that have defined development discourse since its emergence: that the development is about growth, about capital, about technology, about becoming modern” (ibid.). Something similar applies to the IRD discourse.

In Escobar's opinion, the achievement of the IRD discourse is not progressive as it means to maintain a status quo, though under a new name:

“What the IRD discourse achieves is the integration of those statements which reproduce, as it were, the world we know: a world of production and markets, of good and bad, of developed and underdeveloped, of aid, of investment by multinational corporations, of science and technology, of progress and happiness, of individuality and economics” (Escobar 1995: 162f).

From this perspective IRD is marked by its differentiation of tradition and modernity. This differentiation is based on created strata, encompassing both. In sum, Escobar argues, “as a regime of statements and a field of visibilities, in short, as a discourse, IRD is summoned by and at the same time constitutes and reproduces the apparatus of development” (Escobar 1995: 163).

According to Escobar, changing the discourse “entails the collective practice of social actors and the restructuring of existing political economies of truth” (Escobar 1995: 216). One has to “move away” from conventional Western modes of knowing and introduce nuclei which provide space for new forms of power and knowledge (ibid.). This includes the attempt to “breakdown the basic organization of discourse, that is, the appearance of new rules of formation of statements and visibilities” (Escobar 1995: 216f). For development to be “unmade”, it means to introduce a rupture which puts an end to the discursive practice of the last forty years (Escobar 1995: 217). So cultural difference emerges as the most crucial aspect. Escobar argues, that “cultural differences embody [...] possibilities for transforming the politics of representation, that is, for trans-

forming social life itself” (Escobar 1995: 225). In fact, it is cultural difference which, due to its potential for resistance and subversion is “one of the key political facts of our time” (ibid.). In this context popular groups become crucial agents of change. They combine “the defense of cultural difference [...] [with] valorization of economic needs and opportunities in terms that are not strictly those of profit and the market” (Escobar 1995: 226).

A substantial body of criticism of the theory of post-development has emerged since the mid-1990s. One recurring theme is the question of agency, addressed for instance, by Margaret Everett and Jon Harald Sande Lie. Everett states that the central weakness of post-development is its silence on the important role of local elite groups as well as the agency of development’s target population (Everett 1997: 137). Similarly, Lie argues that post-development is flawed because here “individualism and multitude on both an empirical and theoretical level” are neglected (Lie 2007: 47).

Everett rejects a perception of people as “incapable (or nearly so) of autonomous intellectual thought” and argues that local actors are to be understood as “consciousness participants” in the development encounter (Everett 1997: 137). She claims that power is achieved by “the implementation of projects that suit the interests of state or local actors and through the resistance to such projects on the part of the target groups rather than through mystifying development as a science” (Everett 1997: 140). Not only are actors “able to be reflexive towards both imposed knowledge and prevailing discourses”, one also needs to distinguish between the level of the development project, here in particular development documents, and the level of practical implementation (Lie 2007: 51). Lie argues that here dynamic processes take place. Once actors acquire knowledge of the formal order of development (the level of document) they can be reflexive to it. As a result they might generate knowledge that is incorporated into the “larger whole of development” (Lie 2007: 52).

This has serious implications. By simplifying the development encounter - development depicted “as both more unified and more powerful than it is” – one does not decenter development,

which is a proclaimed goal of post-development critique (Everett 1997: 147). A description of development as a purely hegemonic act leaves out the possibility that the development encounter might be used in an instrumental act. Here discourses are regarded as “knowledge frames the actor can enter and exit rather than cultural dope” (Lie 2007: 52). In other words, the act of re-producing discourses is to be analyzed as an active and pragmatic choice (Lie 2007: 60).

Similar points are raised by Knut Nustad. He claims that post-development succeeded in explaining “why 50 years of development interventions have produced so little effects” (Nustad 2007: 35). He argues that the potential of post-development thinking has yet to be found. In other words, “the critique in itself does not point to a way forward for development practice” but this might be achieved by “an extension of the critique to include an examination of how development interventions are transformed in encounters with target populations” (Nustad 2007: 35). According to Nustad the complex character of development needs to be assessed. He is skeptical about the possibility of “reforming” development as it rests “on certain premises that no amount of reform will displace” (Nustad 2007: 38). But acts of reconfiguration take place, when the focus is no longer just on discourses rather on the practice of development (ibid.). According to him post-development will be incomplete, if the “manifestations of development in concrete encounters” are not thoroughly explored (Nustad 2007: 43).

Andy Storey (2000), Stuart Corbridge (1998) and Ray Kiely (1999) are even more skeptical about post-development. According to Kiely the problem is not with the exploitation of the periphery, as post-development assumes, but with the unevenness of the implementation of development. What countries lack is access to development, not too much development (Kiely 1999: 36; see also Storey 2000: 42).

These authors accuse theories of post-development of not reflecting the complexity of development adequately. Opting out is one of many options, by which development can be resisted, re-shaped or used to advantage (Corbridge 1998: 139). According to Storey, post-development does not adequately deal with the questions of gains and losses. Gains are not per se out of reach for

any social entity in the context of an unevenly developing capitalist system (Storey 2000: 42). By neglecting any gains by development, post-development is accused of being blind to the accomplishments of development efforts, e. g. increases in life expectancy (Corbridge 1998: 145; Storey 2000: 42).

Corbridge claims that post-development formulates “unhelpful” and “essentialized” accounts of its objects of study, more precise, of “the West and the Rest [sic], the social minorities and the social majorities” (Corbridge 1998: 144). It is linked to a closed perception of technology and a fixed image of modernity: Post-development in a simplistic manner links “Western” science and reason with technology, and bad technology at that. In addition, modernity is marked by “certainty”, “bureaucracy”, and “oppression” (ibid.). Therefore, he argues, post-development neglects the liberating effect of science (ibid.). Kiely also rejects the position on technology, presented by some post-development scholars. In his view there is an anti-technology bias, a “crude anti-technology position”, among some post-development writers, which “ignores the possibilities which technology may bring” (Kiely 1999: 40). This position, he argues, is “every bit as technologically determinist as the strong developmentalist position of modernization theory in the United States in the 1950s” (Kiely 1999: 41). Kiely states that, in general, post-development stance on anti-essentialism is problematic. Neither is the impact of development universal nor can the world be divided into an “evil North” and “a noble South” (Kiely 1999: 38). In line with this is a critique by Storey regarding the characterization of social movements. He argues that post-development theories wrongly display the character of social movements by describing them purely as “anti-authoritarian” and “democratic” (Storey 2000: 43; Kiely 1999: 45).

According to Corbridge there is a tendency to romanticize the “soil cultures” of the social majorities and post-development does not deliver adequate proof of its claims (Corbridge 1998: 145). Kiely criticizes post-development scholars for their false depiction of peasants and their tradition. From his perspective post-developmentalists are misled when they assume that “peasants are only interested in maintaining a constant level of living standard and are thereby disinterested in

accumulation” and can be treated as independent of the modern-sector (Kiely 1999: 44). In addition, Kiely argues that in post-development literature not enough attention is paid to conflicts within communities (Kiely 1999: 38). Also by highlighting “tradition” post-development neglects the negative aspects of delinking and self-sufficiency (Corbridge 1998: 145).

Similar arguments have been raised by Aram Ziai (Aram Ziai 2007) and Ana Agostino (Ana Agostino 2007). According to Ziai two different sets of discourses can be distinguished. On the one hand, a neopopulist “discourse which is romanticizing traditional culture, portraying cultures as static and rigid, is based on a complete rejection of modernity and promotes the return to subsistence agriculture” (Ziai 2007: 120). On the other hand, a “discourse which is more skeptical in evaluating local communities and cultural tradition, more cautious in criticizing modernity, employs a constructivist perspective on culture and avoids sketching models of future transformation of society” (ibid.). According to Agostino, there is no universalistic post-development theory and practice. In her view, the strength of post-development is to provide a space, in which clues that present another future are to be found (Agostino 2007: 210). Its character she argues, is Utopian, because it replaces “problems” with a “Utopia to be reached”. These utopias are assumed to be “necessarily diverse and in constant transformation” (ibid.). She concludes with the argument that the fact that post-development itself is not fixed but constantly reworked, is a major strength: “Its contribution resides as much in what it says as in what it provokes others to be sensitive about and explore, including the weaknesses and contradictions of post-development” (ibid.). Post-development in itself articulates not necessarily an alternative approach, but “a discourse in construction, open and permeable, sensitive to day-to-day realities and analysis” (Agostino 2007: 197).

5.2.2. Arturo Escobar, Akhil Gupta and the notion of hybridity

Research on the local impact of development has highlighted its productive nature. “Productive” refers to the insight that the entanglement between the development encounter and the locality should not be understood as a confrontation. Rather it needs to be assessed as an “intersection

that creates situations in which people come to see each other in certain ways” (Escobar 1995: 49). As a result, social differences are reconfigured, situated alongside prevailing forms (e. g. caste, class, gender) and are given new meaning. There can be no general answer to the question of how languages and modernity circulate and how they affect different parts of the Third World. The history of immersion in the world economy, the colonial heritage, patterns of insertion into development – it is the combination of the different degrees which is unique to each place (ibid.). In addition, there is no clear cut distinction between the past and the present as they constantly overlap. Concepts of development and modernity are always in dispute through processes of resistance, hybridization with local forms and transformation. As Escobar puts it, “they have, in short, a cultural productivity that needs to be better understood” (Escobar 1995: 51).

According to Escobar, what might achieve this goal is the re-interpretation of modernity. This means understanding transformation as a hybrid process:

“The hypothesis that emerges is no longer that of modernity — generating processes of modernization that operate by substituting the modern for the traditional but of a hybrid modernity characterized by continuous attempts at renewal, by a multiplicity of groups taking charge of the multitemporal heterogeneity particular to each sector and country” (Escobar 1995: 218).

The central issue is “how to understand the ways in which public actors – cultural producers, intermediaries, and the public – transform their practices in the face of modernity’s contradictions” (Escobar 1995: 219). Rather than just vanishing, social entities are marked by their “transformative engagement with modernity”. Thus popular culture needs to be understood as “a present-oriented process of invention through complex hybridization that cuts across class, ethnic, and national boundaries” (ibid.). In this process a “normalized tradition” is not reconfigured. On the contrary the process is marked by an openness, which is “at times critical”, “at times transgressive” and “even humorous” (ibid.).

Escobar claims that there are two fundamental premises. First, he argues, processes of hybridization do not automatically lead to the erosion of long-standing traditions of domination. What needs to be assessed, “is the mediation new elements effect between the familiar and the new, the

local and that which comes from afar, which is ever closer” (Escobar 1995: 219f). As Escobar argues, in the end “this cultural hybridization results in negotiated realities in contexts shaped by traditions, capitalism and modernity” (Escobar 1995: 220). Second, Escobar warns, it does not mean “the exhaustion of Third World imagery, cosmology, and mythical-cultural tradition”. These popular practices have the potential to be counterhegemonic forces due to their resistance to “the instrumentalizing and reactionary attempts of the church, the state, and modern science to domestic popular culture”. They are placed against “narrative ordering, flashing back and forth between historical times, self and group, and alienation from and immersion in magic” (ibid.). Escobar summarizes hybridity as follows:

“Hybridity entails a cultural (re)creation that may or may not be (re)inscribed into hegemonic constellations. Hybridizations cannot be celebrated in and of themselves, to be sure; yet they might provide opportunities for maintaining and working out cultural differences as a social and political fact. By effecting displacements on the normal strategies of modernity, they contribute to the production of different subjectivities” (ibid.).

Akhil Gupta focuses on “postcolonial development” and “how institutions and discourses position subjects and shape their experience in particular ways” (Gupta 1998: 10). Gupta states that the question of postcolonial development is a question of “how underdevelopment becomes a form of identity in the postcolonial world”. He goes on to argue that “underdevelopment is not merely a structural location in the global community of nations; rather underdevelopment is also a form of identity, something that informs people's sense of self”(Gupta 1998: ix).

According to Gupta, the postcolonial condition is marked by a “complex articulation of ‘backwardness’”. Here “development is never a singular or monolithic ‘apparatus’ that imposes itself on the rural people” (ibid.). Gupta notes that the conditions for everyone have shifted. It is the state which is revised by the ascendance of a neoliberal global agenda. Grassroots organizing takes place within “a warped space that is no longer simply ‘local’ and ‘global’ but a little bit of each” (Gupta 1998: 10).

The apparatus and discourse of development needs to be understood as a key to any definition of the postcolonial. At the beginning of this chapter I outlined the historical conjuncture to which scholars of post-development have pointed. For after the end of colonialism a significantly dif-

ferent mode came into being. It is then, Gupta argues, that “development discourses interpellated the newly independent nation-states of the Third-World into particular temporal and spatial locations” (ibid.). According to Gupta the impact of the development discourse has to be interpreted in terms of its ability to impose a new grid of control not only by newly established institutions and treaties but also by the establishment of a particular identity: This means the establishment of the “underdeveloped” as subject and of “underdevelopment” as form of identity in the post-colonial world (Gupta 1998: 11). It is this new form of governance, he argues, which was substituted for the explicit and economic control exercised during official colonialism (Gupta 1998: 10). But one would be wrong to assume that this new form of governance marks a break with the colonial features of the past. Rather it is the moment of conflict, the notion of the hybrid, which is central. As Gupta points out, “it is precisely these unexpected intersections – the legacy of the modernist projects of colonialism, nationalism and development – that I have identified as being central defining features of the postcolonial condition” (Gupta 1998: 20).

Development, agriculture and nationalism, particularly in the case of India, are nearly impossible to separate from each other. “Development”, Gupta notes, served as the chief legitimating function of ruling regimes and as the most important “reason of state” in independent India. Development of agriculture itself was presented as a crucial link in the forging of a “modern” nation. The evolution of national policies and local agricultural practices itself reflected global discourses of development and international food regimes (Gupta 1998: 34). In other words, development can be understood as a discourse which “rehearses, in a virtually unchanged form, the chief premises of the self-representation of modernity” (Gupta 1998: 36). These chief premises are: the belief in teleological narratives, thereby a linear understanding of progress; the superiority of the industrial states and the “nation-state” as the crucial basis of analysis of action (Gupta 1998: 36f). According to Gupta, development can be interpreted as “orientalism transformed into a science for action in the contemporary world” (Gupta 1998: 37). A crucial marker is the ambiguous role of representations of the past. Representations of the past are maintained, because “they prove

that progress, in fact, has taken place” (Gupta 1998: 42). Another feature in development is its character of mimicry. While the orientation of the development discourse, its content, may shift, its strategy remains the same: “To learn, follow, replicate, repeat, improve – they are the incitements of the development discourse”. Gupta goes on to argue that development discourse is a combination of “allochronisms” – “the displacement of “others” in the “Third World’ to the past” with mimicry (Gupta 1998: 40). But, as Gupta puts it, one must be careful when claiming that there is a unity within different development discourses. He points out that development discourse derived from multiple positions and that representing the development discourse as a homogenous formation is dangerous, because “it renders superfluous or epiphenomenal its internal fractures, debates and discussions” (Gupta 1998: 43).

When discussing Escobar’s ideas I referred to the notion of hybridity. In Gupta’s view this is a focal point of the study and the question is how to understand difference. He claims that there has been increasing awareness of the fact that a “system” of otherness is one possible way to engage critically with difference. The crucial question which needs to be addressed is “how to deal with such redoublings and border crossings not as humorous asides but as a central analytic challenge” (Gupta 1998: 5f). He explains that his book is “an attempt to come to grips with this complex border zone of hybridity and impurity which [he sees] as central trait of what may be termed the ‘postcolonial condition’” (Gupta 1998: 6). It “means to pay close attention to the interconnections between divergent discourses and structural forces” (ibid.). Here the “local” and “global” can no longer be distinguished. It is the “grey” in between which shapes and structures everyday life experience. As Gupta notes, globally and nationally circulating discourses of development contributed significantly to the understanding of agriculture in Alipur (ibid.). His account engages critically with postcolonial theory. Theory, he argues, never exists in an empty space. What needs to be critically assessed is the “relationship between the universalizing descriptive or theoretical claims embodied in the notion of a unitary postcolonial theory, and the particular conjunctures of history, culture and place that are the basis of such a generalization” (Gupta 1998: 7).

But, as Gupta makes clear, his primary goal is not to give a detailed account of the theoretical discussion. He rather attempts to see and explore “what kinds of political action and activism are made possible by alternative descriptions of peasant life” (Gupta 1998: 8).

Why should one apply the notion of “post-colonialism”? According to Gupta the postcolonial condition has to be understood as a temporal conjuncture. From his perspective it has two major, interlinked elements. On one hand, the postcolonial condition signals an era that comes after the demise of formal colonial rule. On the other hand, it has to be interpreted as an “analytical approach”, which stretches “the binaries of colonial discourse” (Gupta 1998: 22). Thus the claim of neo-colonialism itself is too limited. As Gupta argues, despite the legacy of colonialism particular features of social life “have been reconstituted as part of a different pattern of global control in which the nation-state no longer promises to play the central role it once did” (ibid.). More precisely the “postcolonial condition” has to be defined as a condition marked by a “global process of regulation and control that does not depend as centrally on the nation-state as did its predecessor” (Gupta 1998: 23).

Above I referred to the interpretation of development as an integral element of the establishment of the nation-state post-WW II. Gupta addresses this point. He argues that “faith in development” slowly vanished as criticism of the “entire project of modernity” and/or of “the project of ‘development’” emerged. The consequence, he states, was a “questioning of the sanctity of the nation and a profound skepticism about the nationalist project” (Gupta 1998: 23f). But this has not been a uniform response. Rather, Gupta argues, the “differing tempos of decolonialization” are fundamental to the postcolonial condition (Gupta 1998: 24). What does the postcolonial condition mean for the individual scholar? Or in other words, what does that mean for the analysis of social entities, such as the peasant? It means that one has to take into account various levels of experience as interrelated rather than to be distinguished from each other. It means to focus on overlapping areas. Thus a double challenge emerges. On the one hand it must be admitted that modernity, colonialism, capitalism, development, discourse, and international science are global

phenomena which have a major impact on social entities and regions. At the same time, one has to acknowledge the differences in the forms taken by these global phenomena due to contestation, reworking and articulation (ibid.). Gupta concludes: “Thus the challenge in analyzing global/local interactions is to be able to acknowledge simultaneously the historical inequalities resulting from colonial control and capitalist expansion and yet acknowledge the overdetermined nature of particular conjunctures and the situatedness [sic!] of the theoretical and popular discourses surrounding them” (Gupta 1998: 25).

Gupta regards the dichotomy between “tradition” and “modernity” as artificial, an essentialism which cannot be found in daily practices of peasants. He notes that farmers welcomed new technologies, e. g. irrigation, tube wells, chemical fertilizers, while at the same time, their practice of agriculture was based upon “indigenous” agronomical knowledge and categories (Gupta 1998: 9). Once again the hybrid character is obvious. Gupta notes on the same page, “to emphasize the multivalent genealogies of ‘modernity’ in colonial and postcolonial settings, therefore, is to emphasize that the ‘non-Western’ is not just a residual trace of a vanishing ‘tradition’ but a constitutive feature of modern life” (ibid.).

Right after the first interviews, he notes, a significant disjuncture existed between the discourse of the farmers and the language of the survey forms was apparent. While this may happen on a field trip, what was surprising, he states, was their response to queries concerning apparent discrepancies in the data (Gupta 1998: 4). When providing explanations the farmers switched codes with ease, speaking in the system of indigenous agronomy in one instance and the “system” of bioscience in the next (Gupta 1998: 5). Here “indigenously” developed knowledge of agriculture was combined with an agricultural practice conducted largely with chemical fertilizers, electric tube wells, “scientifically” bred hybrid seeds (Gupta 1998: 155). It shows how institutions and discourses position subjects and shape their experience in particular ways and at the same time are reconfigured by the subjects themselves. Furthermore, he notes,

“‘Scientific’ theories of agronomy were freely interspersed with humoral ones in debates about agricultural issues, and when one examined *practices* [sic!], the situation became even more complicated. Farmers’ expla-

nations of agricultural practices interwove references to the politics of caste, class, and gender with theories of agronomy” (Gupta 1998: 157).

In other words, agricultural understandings and practices have to be understood as the result of the interactions between disjunctive and incommensurably hybrid discourses. Thus discourses of agriculture present themselves within and are constitutive for an open and dynamic field of action, constantly reconfigured by and in interaction with politics of caste, class, and gender differentiation (Gupta 1998: 160). According to Gupta “tradition” and “indigenous” are dangerous terms. They represent “twin concepts that occupy the role of the Other in modernity” (Gupta 1998: 179). On the same page, he argues, while supporters of modernity locate the Other in “tradition”, to be found in the Third World, critics of modernity find their Other in “indigenous” people. The difference can be found in their relation to modernity. More precise, “while the ‘traditional’ is defined as the lack of modernity, ‘the indigenous’ is defined as what modernity lacks” (Gupta 1998: 180). From a critical perspective, the “indigenous” thus functions as a “residual category”, which incorporates an extraordinarily varied set of phenomena under one label: “It is not clear what could possibly unite all of them unless one understands that it is a grab bag for that which is not modern: unincorporated, resistant, incommensurable, originary, authentic, or simply, an alternative” (ibid.). This is crucial because it relates directly to peasants. “Indigenous” knowledge of agronomy – defined as „alternative epistemologies of agriculture and natural resources“ (see Gupta 1998: 155) – , he argues, is crucial, because it provides culturally constituted recipes for dealing with the varying conditions and exigencies encountered in farming communities. Thus they inform and motivate the action of peasants (Gupta 1998: 181). Nevertheless, Gupta concludes that “agriculture in Alipur does not conform to descriptions of ‘traditional’ farming or to the idealized picture of subaltern earnestly guarding ‘indigenous’ knowledge against the insurmountable odds of a homogenizing world system” (Gupta 1998: 186). In addition, he notes, “neither occupying a position of pure opposition to the modern nor assailable to a homogenizing ‘Western’ episteme, farmers in Alipur constantly destabilized the oppositions that have framed explanations of subaltern, Third World peoples” (ibid.).

Consequently, essentialist explanations are not suitable for assessing the position of peasants. Instead the concept of hybridity should be applied. But what is the character of this hybridity? It means, as Gupta points out, “to move beyond the hybridity as a singular location that is an in-between, temporarily suspended space, between two (or more) rather securely positioned and stable locations” (Gupta 1998: 179). He insists that we need to acknowledge the “specificities of the historical construction of place” and to be aware of “the continuing role of power differentials that shape new forms of global discipline” (ibid.).

In sum, post-development focuses on the institution of development. In so far it is different from Subaltern Studies where the focus was on historiography. A critique of the concepts of backwardness and poverty is the crucial point of post-development theory. Post-development theorists have argued that these concepts provided the fundament for the emergence of a particular development regime. Central features of this regime were an exclusive focus on expertise, technology and international institutions. It is argued that the concepts promoted by the development complex became guiding principles for a negative identity described by lack and failure.

At the same time these concepts – backwardness and poverty – legitimize intervention from outside. More precise, an essentialist description of the peasant – as backward and obstacle to progress – is deployed and thereby the peasant becomes an object of intervention from outside. At the same time the peasant as an entity with a pejorative connotation is constantly reproduced. Reforms may happen but they take place only within a never changing discursive space.

Criticism of post-development argued that development is not to be understood as monolithic. On the contrary peasants can actively reshape the development complex and are not just overwhelmed by it. This is underlined by the theory of hybridity in which the peasant is not tied to the past but mediates between old and new knowledge as well as technologies.

Finally the peasant emerges as a conscious agent which should take his/her own decision instead of being told so. Thereby the peasant becomes a political entity with own rights. This is precisely what food sovereignty is all about.

5.3 Discourse 3: Food sovereignty

5.3.1. *The food sovereignty movement*

The third discourse related to the entity of the peasant is the concept of food sovereignty. The term “food sovereignty” emerged in the second half of the 1990s. Since then it has become a major topic when discussing the future of international food politics. There is no fixed definition of food sovereignty. If there is something close to a definition it is more a set of principles. Hannah Wittman, Annette Desmarais and Nettie Wiebe define food sovereignty as “the rights of people to control their own food systems, including their markets, production modes, food cultures and environments” (Wittman et al. 2011: 2). Tina Beuchelt and Detlef Virchow have a similar understanding of the concept. According to them food sovereignty “refers to the right of communities, peoples and states to independently determine their own food and agricultural policies” (Beuchelt & Virchow 2012: 260). Food sovereignty aims to strengthen peasants and smallholder agriculture, which enables these groups to become active participants in national and international arenas as well as to establish autonomy. Seen this way, the concept contributes to rural development, poverty eradication and food security. Other authors have linked food sovereignty more closely to policy making and focused more on the element of resistance inherent to the idea. Steve Suppan sees food sovereignty as “an agricultural, environmental, and rural development policy framework that made its first appearance in 1996” (Suppan 2008: 111). Michael Windfuhr and Jennie Jonsén claim that the term food sovereignty has evolved into “an umbrella term for particular approaches to tackling the problems of hunger and malnutrition, as well as promoting rural development, environmental integrity and sustainable livelihoods” (Windfuhr & Jonsén 2005: 1).

The lack of a common definition has led to some criticism. A particularly well-known critique was formulated by Raj Patel, though he admits that the inconsistency in definitions might be due to the fundamental principle of people power and the fact that a fixed, narrow definition would actually contradict this very principle. Patel states that “Food Sovereignty is, if anything, overde-

fined. There are so many versions of the concept, it's hard to know exactly what it means" (Patel 2009: 663). He goes on to argue that "since food sovereignty is a call for peoples' right to shape and craft food policy, it can hardly be surprising that this right is used to explore and expand the covering political philosophy" (ibid.). At its core food sovereignty demands "social change such that the capacity to shape food policy can be exercised at all appropriate levels" (Patel 2009: 670). It demands a particular condition so that "everybody can be able substantively to engage with those policies" (ibid.). In 2009, Hans Haugen noted, that the concept is "not yet endorsed or agreed upon in any inter-governmental forum" (Haugen 2009: 264). He also cites the 2008 Synthesis Report of the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development which concluded that as yet no international definition of food sovereignty can be found (ibid.).

Some countries and regional bodies introduced the concept into their constitutions or founding documents (see Beuchelt & Virchow 2012: 264). On the regional level the concept of food sovereignty was incorporated into the regional agricultural policies of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Furthermore, at the 2008 summit, twelve Latin American and Caribbean heads of state debated whether the concept should be part of their regional strategies (Beuchelt & Virchow 2012: 263). The EU in its 2009 report "Food security: Understanding and meeting the challenge of poverty" provides the following definition: "Food sovereignty concerns the right of states to implement the most appropriate agricultural policies for their populations, provided that they do not harm agriculture in other countries." (European Commission 2009: 9). The International Labor Organization (ILO), the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) and the World Bank have been rather silent on the concept and its implications for their policies. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) refers to the concept in some of its documents, but does not provide a definition. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has paid more attention to the concept. Nevertheless, at least till 2011, no official FAO document contained the concept (Beuchelt & Virchow 2012:

262). Nevertheless in 2003 the FAO signed a cooperation agreement with the International NGO/CSO Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) (ibid).

Murky definition aside there are several approaches to the concept of food sovereignty. One possibility is to look at the declarations and statements which have been formulated by the food sovereignty movement. In the recent decades the movement La Via Campesina has become one of the most powerful. It addresses the issues of various groups, constituting the peasantry. La Via Campesina extends beyond national borders and across continents, connecting 148 organizations in 69 countries (Wittman 2009: 813). This includes small and medium-scale farmers, rural women, farm workers and indigenous agrarian communities in Asia, the Americas, Europe and Africa. According to the homepage of La Via International in India the movement is represented by four members: Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU), Karnataka Rajya Ryota Sangha (KRRS), Kerala Coconut Farmers Association, Nandya Raita Samakya (Andra Pradesh) and the Tamil Nadu Farmers Association. The BKU branches of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, New Delhi, Rajasthan and Uttaranchal are official members of the movement (La Via Campesina 2012).

It provides forums, in which peasants can address their demands and needs. According to Desmarais, La Via Campesina promotes a collective identity as well as providing spaces for internal debate. Furthermore, it is understood to push for alliances with other social movements and progressive non-governmental organizations (Desmarais 2008: 138).

Annette Desmarais makes an interesting point about how the movement got its name. The term “peasant” is ambiguous. In the English language scholarly literature of Europe it is very much linked to feudalism. Desmarais argues that it was in the colonial context, especially in other languages, that its meaning expanded. Even in its broadest usage – “campesino” in Latin America – peasants were depicted as remnants of the past and in everyday usage the term was pejorative. Consequently, she claims “resurrecting ‘peasants’ is an act of resistance” (Desmarais 2008: 139). In other words, right from the start a radical political agenda was part of the movement. In her view the act of “reclaiming the meaning of ‘peasant’ is perhaps one of the Via Campesina’s most

important accomplishments” (Desmarais 2008: 140). It is because of this that a discussion of the entity of the peasant at the turn of the century cannot ignore the concept of food sovereignty.

According to Desmarais the meaning of La Via Campesina can be understood as being

“a transnational movement of people defined by place.[...] It is a movement in which participants not only seek to provide an alternative voice in international fora [sic!], but also seek to use the connections among themselves thus forged to reinforce their identity, through the use of a constant referent: the routine of their everyday lives grounded in planting and harvesting” (Desmarais 2008:141).

The La Via Campesina movement attempts to maintain a strong connection to the everyday reality of the various “peasant” groups. This is exemplified by the membership structure. There are two ways of becoming a La Via Campesina representative: either by being farmers oneself or by election or appointment by farm organizations. Membership is limited to authentic organizations of peasants, farmers, rural women, farm workers, indigenous communities that formally uphold the positions of La Via Campesina (Desmarais 2008: 140).

In April 1996 La Via Campesina had held its Second International Conference in Tlaxcala, Mexico. At Tlaxcala the delegates approved eleven principles of food sovereignty. They provided the foundation for La Via Campesina’s position on food sovereignty, titled “Food Sovereignty: A Future without Hunger”, which was presented at the World Food Summit that November in Rome (Wittman et al. 2011: 4; for a copy of the statement see Wittman et al. appendix 1: The Right to Produce and Access to Land, p. 197-199). Because it is a crucial document for understanding the food sovereignty movement, I will elaborate on the content. In the introduction food sovereignty is defined as “the right of each nation to maintain and develop its own capacity to produce its basic foods respecting cultural and productive diversity”.

The first point proclaims that food is more than a commodity rather “it is a basic human right”. The paper explicitly states that access to food has to be understood as a constitutional right. It is the duty of the nation to “guarantee the development of the primary sector to ensure the concrete realization of this fundamental right”.

The second point refers to the question of land reform. The goal of land reform should be to provide ownership and control of the land to the cultivators of the land particularly if a territory is linked to indigenous peoples. There has to be access to productive land, credit, technology, markets, and extension services (Wiebe et al. 2011: 197f).

The third point deals with the use of resources and with sustainability. It is claimed that “food sovereignty entails the sustainable care and use of natural resources especially land, water and seeds”. Genetic resources are seen as the heritage of mankind. The patenting and commercialization of genetic resources in any form is rejected. Consequently, the World Trade Organization’s Intellectual Property Rights Agreement is labeled “unacceptable”.

The fourth point addresses food trade issues. Food self-sufficiency and prioritization of production for domestic consumption is demanded. The practice of “dumping” should be abandoned and export subsidies should be dismantled. Nutrition is seen as the main purpose of food production, not trade (Wiebe et al. 2011: 198).

The fifth point refers to multilateral institutions and the role of capital, in particular speculative capital. The extension of multinational capital within the agricultural sector, supported by major donor institutions, is strongly criticized and a “strictly enforced” code of conduct is seen as necessary.

The connection between social peace and food sovereignty is established in the sixth point. Practices of exclusion and dominance – e. g. through racism, forced urbanization, displacement, and repression of peasants – are seen as a major obstacle to achieve food sovereignty.

The last point is a demand for a strong participatory approach. “Processes of democratization” within international institutions are seen as urgently needed. The authors insist that “peasants and small farmers must have direct input into formulation of agricultural policies at all levels” (Wiebe et al. 2011: 199).

By 2000 the concept of food sovereignty was reinvigorated. In the International NGO/CSO Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC), responsible for organizing the NGO forum at the time of the World Food Summit, it was firmly established. It featured as a global network, with representatives of indigenous people, fisherfolk, farmers/peasants, youth, women, and NGOs, and emerged as a result of a joined approach by 52 civil society organization (Wittman et al. 2011: 6). The World Forum on Food Sovereignty in Havana, Cuba, substantially strengthened the movement. From September 3rd to 7th, 2001, 400 delegates from peasant and indigenous organizations, fishing associations, non-governmental organizations, social agencies, as well as academics and researchers from 60 countries discussed the progress made since the 1996 World Summit and the challenges ahead. In addition, they began to plan for the next World Food Summit: “Five Years later” (2002). Further attempts for increased unity included the establishment of an international food sovereignty network linking the different actors. This resulted in the People’s Food Sovereignty Statement which was distributed to the public in 2001/2002.

In 2007 the IPC took the lead in organizing the Nyéléni International Forum on Food Sovereignty in Mali. The final declaration of the forum was made public on 27th February 2007. It includes the following definition of food sovereignty:

“Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. It defends the interests and inclusion of the next generation. It offers a strategy to resist and dismantle the current corporate trade and food regime, and directions for food, farming, pastoral and fisheries systems determined by local producers. Food sovereignty prioritizes local and national economies and markets and empowers peasant and family farmer-driven agriculture, artisanal - fishing, pastoralist-led grazing, and food production, distribution and consumption based on environmental, social and economic sustainability. Food sovereignty promotes transparent trade that guarantees just income to all peoples and the rights of consumers to control their food and nutrition. It ensures that the rights to use and manage our lands, territories, waters, seeds, livestock and biodiversity are in the hands of those of us who produce food. Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social classes and generations” (Forum for Food Sovereignty 2007: 1).

Several points deserve closer attention. First, there is a crucial legal dimension to the concept of food sovereignty to which I will refer in my assessment of the Declarations of Rights of Peasants. Second, there is a strong anti-market bias. There is a certain similarity to the critique of economics which I outlined as a marker of post-development. Third, it attempts to be progressive and

formulates statements going beyond the present. Radically interpreted, it attempts to fundamentally alter, not just to reform, the status quo. Fourth, the concept particularly addresses the position of smallholder food producers and peasants. These groups are seen as central to agriculture and there is an assumed gap between the degree of representation in agricultural policies and the de facto contribution. Better access to and greater control over productive resources as well as greater political and social influence are seen as prerequisites for closing the gap (Beuchelt & Virchow 2012: 261).

Sustainability, ecology, and self-reliance/self-sufficiency are key words for the concept of sovereignty. Individual decision-making is not to be constrained by pressure from outside. From this perspective, peasants have the means to generate the social, economic and political resources necessary for a healthy life with human dignity. Rather than prescribing a precise way for dealing with the issues at stake it attempts to transform the conditions under which an assumed particular reality is structured. In short, if an attempt is made to define food sovereignty it is the combination of a particular set of elements. The concept is holistic and it is assumed that it can only be successful if the full implementation of all its elements is achieved (Beuchelt & Virchow 2012: 262). According to Ramesh Sharma the concept of food sovereignty can be defined by three core principles:

(a) the centrality of small family farming: As Sharma argues, proponents of food sovereignty would claim that it provides a solution to three major problems: food, protecting the environment and poverty. The key issue is whether small farmers can produce their own food and have full control over the resources necessary to produce that food. In addition, it is argued that the various efforts to change policies have further marginalized and impoverished small farmers.

(b) the centrality of food production and a small farmer's right to control production: Sharma states that food sovereignty is "all about farmers' right to produce and market food and have full local and national sovereignty on policies required for this" (Sharma 2011: 13).

(c) control over productive/natural resources: As Sharma states, marginalization from access and control is seen as a major cause of hunger. That is why full access to, and control over, natural resources is essential for food production which is an important component of the concept of food sovereignty (Sharma 2011: 13f).

A look at the history of food sovereignty demonstrates that the entity of the peasant developed in a holistic context, in which a particular description of the peasant – for instance, the peasant as an insurgent – no longer applied. Rather the peasant became the projection of an alternative future, in which the various elements necessary for the survival of humankind would be in balance. The peasant thus represented progressive values, on which a better society could be built. Here the last point of the Declaration of Nyéleni is worth emphasizing.

The Deccan Development Society is one example of how the ideals of food sovereignty such as autonomy and self-sufficiency as well as the promotion of alternative peasant practices can be implemented (Deccan Development Society 2012). The Deccan Development Society is located in Andhra Pradesh. It spans across 75 villages and has 5000 female members. They belong to the caste of the dalits, being at the bottom of the Indian social hierarchy. The women are organized in Sanghams, which are voluntary village level associations of the poor. Farmers mostly plant their seeds on dryland having no assured irrigation and receiving no subsidies for their organic inputs. The fundamental principles are organized around access and control. In total there are five principles of autonomy: autonomy over food production, seeds, natural resources, markets and media.

Institutions were established to be run by members of the society themselves. Community Grain Funds were established in order to be independent of food aid in times of scarcity. The Community Grain fund is part of the Alternative Public Distribution System. Households are classified in a process of participatory wealth ranking. Poor families are entitled to receive loans which need to be repaid in grains. With the gains from the surplus of food land is purchased. Gene Banks

store local plants conserving local biodiversity. Traditional knowledge is secured with the possibility to revitalize century-old farming techniques.

The DDS's philosophy is based on participatory rural appraisal methodologies. Programs are assumed to start within the society itself. DDS therefore is supposed to mediate and support those activities that the community decides to pursue. DDS aims to relocate people's knowledge in health and agriculture. The DDS set up an own science center linking farming communities. The science center explores organic and environment friendly agriculture and promoting its findings to farmers.

The concept of food sovereignty was a response to a new quality of global integration, exemplified by the introduction of agriculture into global finance and trade. More precisely, the concept of food sovereignty can be interpreted as a counter-movement in reaction to neo-liberal policies (Beuchelt & Virchow 2012: 261). This point becomes clearer when a conceptual approach is taken. How does sovereignty differ from other concepts of food distribution/access?

5.3.2. Food sovereignty, food security and the right to food

Since World War II three major concepts of access to food have emerged: food security, food sovereignty and the right to food. These concepts are not mutually exclusive which is best addressed by Madeleine Fairbairn. She emphasizes that "food sovereignty did not arise in a conceptual or political vacuum". Instead "food sovereignty is both a reaction to and an intellectual offspring of the earlier concepts of the 'right to food' and 'food security'" (Fairbairn 2011: 15). Social movements are fundamental to promoting the concept of food sovereignty. They do not only name and rename the problems of the complex political and economic structures which shape the access to and the availability of food. In addition, they contribute to processes of naming and interpretation of food-related frameworks that promote their own distinctive versions of how the food regime ought to be structured (Fairbairn 2011: 16).

The right to food is the oldest of these concepts. It is expressed in article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In 1966 the right to food formed part of the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Article 11 states that “the States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food” (United Nations 1976). Referring to “the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger”, parties to the Covenant are urged “to improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge, by disseminating knowledge of the principles of nutrition and by developing or reforming agrarian systems in such a way as to achieve the most efficient development and utilization of natural resources”; and to ensure “an equitable distribution of world food supplies in relation to need [...] taking into account the problems of both food-importing and food-exporting countries”. In 2000 Comment No.12 was adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It refers to Article 11 of the Covenant, labeled the right to adequate food. In 2004 the FAO approved the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food in the Context of National Food Security. These guidelines include paragraphs on trade in Section III on International Actions, Measures and Commitments (Haugen 2009: 265). As Beuchelt and Virchow argue, both Comment No. 12 and the Voluntary Guidelines extend and deepen the understanding and activities required to implement stronger policies in order to guarantee the right to adequate food. They argue that both highlight the issue of access to food as well as the need for improved access to production resources, particularly if hunger and poverty are located in rural areas (Beuchelt & Virchow 2012: 266).

The concept of food security was introduced in the early 1970s, when the head of states met for the World Conference in 1974. In the mid-1980s the definition of food security was heavily disputed. In 1983 the FAO definition included the concept of securing access by vulnerable people to available supplies. Thereby demand and supply were both addressed. In 1986 the World Bank Report “Poverty and Hunger” opened up the discussion on the transitional nature of food securi-

ty. The distinction between chronic food insecurity and transitory food insecurity was introduced. The former referred to problems of continuing or structural poverty and low incomes, while the latter was linked to periods of intensified pressure caused by natural disasters, economic collapse or conflict (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations 2003: 27). In 1996 the World Food Summit agreed on a new definition of food security, which has largely remained unchanged.

In its report the concept concludes that a useful working definition of food security would be as follows:

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Household food security is the application of this concept to the family level, with individuals within households as the focus of concern” (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations 2003: 29).

Strong proponents of the food sovereignty movement see a conflict between food sovereignty and food security. In her argumentation Fairbairn provides a perfect example. She writes: “The difference is that while food security incorporates many aspects of the regime and the globalization project, food sovereignty embodies a self conscious rejection of almost everything they stand for” (Fairbairn 2011: 27). The introduction of household security was and is seen as a highly problematic step. It was interpreted as an attempt to extend the power of the market and to promote liberal trade policy. As a result it was assumed that national governments had become powerless, unable to serve the people. As Fairbairn argues, “food security is now a frame about the micro-economic choices facing individuals in a free market, rather than the policy choices facing governments” (Fairbairn 2011: 24). She argues, that by the 1990s, the “neoliberal discourse of the globalization project [marked by] individualizing and commodifying tendencies [replaced] the state-centered discourse of the development project as the primary influence on food security” (Fairbairn 2011: 25). She adds that “perhaps the most striking manifestation of neoliberal logic within the household security frame however is that this need for individual purchasing power is effortlessly transformed into a call for liberal trade policies” (ibid.). From her perspective food sovereignty opposes the corporate food regime on three major points:

First, food sovereignty challenges the corporate food regime “by calling into question the micro-economic assumptions upon which it is predicated” (Fairbairn 2011: 27). Here language is crucial. As she argues, food sovereignty resists the “individualizing” vocabulary. She refers to terms like “peasant solidarity”, “collective rights” and “ownership over resources”. Furthermore, as outlined above, food is not treated as a commodity. In addition, food sovereignty stresses “things with little quantifiable economic worth”, e. g. culture, biodiversity and traditional knowledge (ibid.).

Second, food sovereignty attempts to “delegitimize the corporate food regime by questioning the increasingly global-level control of the world food system” (ibid.). As shown above smaller scales are regarded as promising. It demands to take action in the form of support for prices, agrarian reform and rural development programs (Fairbairn 2011: 28).

Third, the food sovereignty movement calls for a “politicization of food and agriculture”. It attempts to “explicitly name the actors within the system who benefit by maintaining the status quo and from such supposedly neutral policy tools as the WTO Agreement on Agriculture” (ibid.).

The tendencies addressed by Fairbairn are also referred to by other authors of the food sovereignty movement, among them, Hannah Wittman. She illustrates the process of transformation very well. In her opinion in the post-WW II period “a relatively closed-loop system” has been dismantled through processes of distinction: “producers and consumers are increasingly separated not just in the context of rural/urban or national economics but also further afield through agricultural trade and regional specialization” (Wittman 2009: 808). Wittman goes on to argue that “technological advances in biology and agronomy allowed not only a ‘domination’ or ‘mastery’ of the ecological foundations of agriculture but also its discipline through simplification, specialization, and rationalization” (ibid.). It was then that “the erosion of agrarian citizenship” took place as “rural producers [were] separated from both means of production and rural social and political networks” (ibid.). In the end a process of transformation of agriculture from a “localized and diversified reproductive strategy” towards a “highly productive, market-oriented, and

eventually globalized commodity” was underway (ibid.). Through processes of simplification, standardization and intensification, she argues, the particular social and economic conditions of the diversity of agrarian landscapes were demolished, and the smallholder farmers were pushed to the brink. The deep social and ecological effects of industrialization have also contributed to this process, as they are at the root of social displacement and ecological degradation (Wittman 2009: 810).

The processes described above by Hannah Wittman are also addressed by Vandana Shiva. She outlines three key mechanisms which are supposed to have a direct impact on rural agricultural livelihoods and thereby on the condition of the peasantry. First, she argues, the process of liberalization has meant the destruction of market support at domestic level both in terms of procurement and in terms of guarantee of Minimum Support Price. Second, trade liberalization has resulted in diversion from food crops to perishable cash crops and promotion of monocultures. As a consequence market dependency on corporate monopolies has been established and restricted peasant agency. Third, the last mechanism is the removal of quantitative restrictions on imports and dumping of subsidized, artificially cheap imports (Shiva 2004: 722). In general, in her perspective, one of the most important shifts has been the replacement of “people centered concerns” by “trade and corporation centered concerns” (Shiva 2004: 726). She rejects the argument of the low productivity of the small farmer which by proponents of this argument is deployed to justify industrialization and corporatization of agriculture. She argues that if one applies criteria such as food and nutrition and food productivity per acre or efficiency in water use it is the small farm which is more productive than the larger one. It is also because of these insights that small-scale farms are promoted as the only choice for sustainable agriculture (Shiva 2004: 716).

In the argumentation by proponents of food sovereignty the WTO and its rejection as a Western-biased institution within the post-GATT trade regime plays an important role. Therefore the findings of the Situation Assessment Survey of Farmers “Some Aspects of Farming” is worth noticing. According to this report only 8% of farmers at the all India-level had heard of the World

trade Organization and had some idea about its objectives and activities. The definition of the farmer is the same as given above in the Indian government report on indebtedness. Knowledge about the WTO was mostly distributed in Kerala (44%), followed Punjab (23%) and Tamil, Nadu, West Bengal and Haryana (all 12%) (Government of India 2005b: 10). It suggests that there is a significant gap between the theoretical discourse of food sovereignty and the practical discourse between the peasants themselves.

There are several different interpretations of the connections between these concepts. One interesting point made by Beuchelt and Virchow is that the concept of food sovereignty and the right to food are very similar, apart from some significant differences. These include the target group, the perspective, corporate ownership in agricultural production, patents on seeds, plants and animals and GMOs in agriculture (Beuchelt & Virchow 2012: 270). Others have argued that while food security tries to operate within the existing world food system, food sovereignty is about changing the system. Food sovereignty is supposed to represent “green rationalism”, referring to “radically different understandings of the environment, human-environment interactions, and human society”. This is in contrast to the “economic rationalism” of food security (Aerni 2011: 24).

What kind of problems and challenges lie ahead concerning these concepts? To start with, there is a debate on the extent to which these different frameworks oppose each other. According to Windfuhr and Jonsén these concepts serve essentially different purposes. They argue that “while Food Security is more of a technical concept, and the Right to Food a legal one, Food Sovereignty is essentially a political concept” (Windfuhr & Jonsén 2005: 15). The authors acknowledge the increasing recognition of the concept of food sovereignty. But the question remains “how advocates of Food Sovereignty could elaborate proposals that would achieve it” (ibid.). This is a very challenging endeavor because as “a strategy to achieve it will have to be highly complex” (ibid.). They propose six possible ways to achieve it: (a) A Code of Conduct on the Human Right to Food, (b) International Convention on Food Sovereignty, (c) a World Commission on Sustaina-

ble Agriculture and Food Sovereignty, (d) a reformed and strengthened United Nations, (e) an independent dispute settlement mechanism, (f) a binding treaty that defines the rights of smallholder farmers to the assets, resources, and legal protections (Windfuhr & Jonsén 2005: 16). According to Sharma the concept of food sovereignty can contribute significantly to eliminate inequality – which is a prerequisite for fighting hunger and poverty – by redirecting development efforts towards small farmers (Sharma 2011: 16). But the strength of the concept, he argues, is undermined by a lack of missing empirical evidence and too much emphasis on rhetoric. He argues food sovereignty does not shed light on the country and context specific of how to implement concrete proposals (Sharma 2011: 13).

Beuchelt and Virchow claim that its strengths are: the focus on the marginalized smallholder food producers, the call for agricultural reforms and access to productive resources, as well as its criticism of unfair market access due to structural economic imbalances between countries, and trade distortions in the agricultural sector. In addition, the authors highlight the value of the concept for political mobilization, best exemplified by La Via Campesina, by which substantial political pressure can be placed upon political decision makers. However, Beuchelt and Virchow think that the concept of food sovereignty is weak concerning hungry rural and urban populations. They also criticize that the exclusive focus on the issue of access to productive resources and national or local self-determination of agricultural and food policies does not take into account the various other elements involved in fighting poverty and hunger, such as the need for solid infrastructure. They also miss a discussion about topics such as agricultural production and disadvantages due to unfavorable climatic and infrastructural conditions – which may impede local production – or the possibility of large-scale covariate harvest losses (Beuchelt & Virchow 2012: 270). According to them the concept of right to (adequate) food presents a better option, because it applies to all human beings, so its scope is greater. Furthermore, it is internationally agreed upon and has been ratified by nearly every country in the world (Beuchelt & Virchow 2012: 270f).

Others have been more critical of the concept of food sovereignty. Philipp Aerni argues that the food sovereignty movement could play a more significant role if it did not cling to “wrong baseline assumptions [which are] defensive, not progressive” (Aerni 2011: 23). He argues that the food sovereignty movement is “increasingly dominated by the privileged in affluent countries who would like everyone to practice their rather expensive lifestyle” (Aerni 2011: 36). Thus he sees the concept of food sovereignty as a projection of Western values and lifestyles onto the rest of the world, ignoring the struggles and needs of the people in small-scale agriculture outside the Western hemisphere. He particularly targets an exclusive focus on self-sufficiency and argues for an inclusive agricultural development built upon hybrid models of problem-oriented collaboration (Aerni 2011: 36f). Similarly Douglas Southgate criticizes food sovereignty for its focus on self-sufficiency. He argues that rigid self-sufficiency is doing more damage than it is contributing to progress and has the effect of facilitating protectionism (Southgate 2011: 22).

Finally, I will present one of the most recent documents of the food sovereignty movement: The Declaration of the Rights of Peasants (La Via Campesina 2009). This declaration was adopted in 2008 by La Via Campesina at the La Via Campesina Conference on the Rights of Peasants, Jakarta, Indonesia. La Via Campesina argued at the Human Rights Council in March 2009 and at the General Assembly in April 2009 that the Declaration of the Rights of Peasants and the adoption of a UN Convention opened up space for “a solution to both the discrimination against peasants and the food crisis” (Golay 2009: 18). In January 2011 at its sixth session the Human Rights Council debated the “Preliminary study on the advancement of the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas,” prepared by the drafting group of the Advisory Committee on the right to food (Human Rights Council 2011). In February 2012 the “Final study on the advancement of the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas” was unanimously approved by the Advisory Committee on Human Rights of the United Nations (FIAN 2012).

The Declaration of the Rights of Peasants itself contains preliminary remarks and lists 13 articles. The preliminary section cites the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Cov-

enant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action. It states that a Declaration of Rights of the Peasants is necessary as “the current agricultural conditions threaten the lives of peasants, worsening the environment, decreasing peasants’ productivity and decreasing the livelihood of the peasants”. Furthermore, an extra declaration is demanded as “peasants constitute a special social group which is vulnerable so that the realization of the rights of peasants require special measures to truly respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of peasants enshrined in international human rights law” (La Via Campesina 2009: Preliminary remarks).

Article 1 defines a peasant which reads as follows:

“A peasant is a man or woman of the land, who has a direct and special relationship with the land and nature through the production of food and/or other agricultural products. Peasants work the land themselves, rely above all on family labor and other small forms of organizing labor. Peasants are traditionally embedded in their local communities and they take care of local landscapes and of agro-ecological systems. The term peasant can apply to any person engaged in agriculture, cattle-raising, pastoralism, handicrafts-related to agriculture or a related occupation in rural area. This includes indigenous people working on the land” (La Via Campesina 2009).

The focus is clearly on small-scale agriculture. It is interesting that there are two contrasting points. In the first part there is a clear bias against technique. The term “family labor” implies that mechanization and diversification into non-farming activities is low. There is a reference to peasants as “ecological stewards”. It implies that peasants live in harmony with the resources around them, preserving instead of destroying them. The focus is on the “community”, rather than external markets.

In contrast to this, the second part is rather vague and has an extremely broad scope. There is no reference to a particular group and no criteria are provided. The second part is slightly contradictory as this section alone would not exclude landlords or farmers who are closer to agribusiness. A third meaning of peasant is established when the Declaration explicitly states that “the term peasant also applies to the landless.” The FAO definition of 1984 is cited in order to define landlessness.

Articles II and III are broader in scope in the sense that they confirm general human rights. Articles IV-XIII are more directly related to agricultural practice. Article II: “Rights of peasants” contains four points. The first point reminds everyone that there should be no gender discrimination towards male and female peasants as both are entitled to equal rights. The second point cites the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law as the legal foundation for peasant rights. The third point refers to the freedom from any form of discrimination. The fourth point states that peasants are entitled to “actively participate in policy design, decision making, implementation, and monitoring of any project, program or policy affecting their territories” (La Via Campesina 2009: Article II). Article III: “Right to life and to an adequate standard of living” contains nine points. Points III.2 and III.3 specifically address women’s rights. III.2 declares the right to be protected from domestic violence and III.3 the right of women to control their bodies. This includes a ban on any form of human trafficking.

Articles IV-XI establish autonomy and equality. Autonomy refers in particular to individual and collective decision-making. For instance, Art. V.1 states that peasants have the right to determine the varieties of the seeds they plant. Resources cannot simply be taken away by other entities as Art. IV.10 states the right to security of tenure. Equality refers to fairness as well as power relations, understood as a gap in knowledge. Art. VII.1 states that “peasants have the right to obtain impartial and balanced information about capital [...] related to peasant needs”. Art. VII.6 makes the point that “peasants have the right to get a fair payment for their work to fulfill their basic needs and those of their families”. States must provide funds to the peasant to develop agriculture (Art. VI.1). Biotechnology, patent rights and TNCs are all mentioned in Art. X: right to biological diversity. Peasants are entitled to reject “patents threatening biological diversity” (X.3) as well as “intellectual property rights of goods, services, resources and knowledge” (X.4). Peasants are accorded the right to reject “certification mechanisms established by transnational companies”. Local guarantee schemes by peasants, including those with government support, are to “be

promoted and protected” (X.6). Peasants can claim compensation for environmental damage (XI.4).

Art. XII establishes freedom of speech. (XII.1). There can be no restriction on forming interest groups, such as independent peasants’ organizations or unions (XII.2). Peaceful protest cannot be punished as peasants have the right to resist oppression (XII.5).

Art. XIII: Right to have access to justice contains three points. Point 1 notes that peasants have the right to a fair justice system, to have effective and non-discriminatory access to courts and to have legal aid. According to point 2, they cannot be criminalized for their claims and struggles. Point 3 states that peasants have the right to be informed and to legal assistance.

In this chapter I outlined how since the early 1990s a powerful transnational peasant movement has emerged. The declaration of the rights of peasants is one example for the demand of peasants to be regarded as sovereigns of their soil and resources. Focus is on small-scale agriculture and connections between the peasant and his/her resources. What Subaltern Studies, post-development and food sovereignty have in common is the attempt to reestablish the peasant as the crucial agent in decision-making processes. In line with post-development food sovereignty it denies a description of the peasant as an entity with a pejorative connotation. It goes beyond post-development because it adds concrete political demands and promotes their implementation. Thereby the peasant is presented as a distinguished social entity with particular rights and demands which are threatened within the logic of the globalized neo-liberal economy.

6. Further research

In the last chapter I focused on how the entity of the peasant has been framed in particular discourses. The question remains as to how those who have been so addressed have responded. As far as food sovereignty is concerned, La Via Campesina has become a crucial forum for peasant voices. In the case of this organization the theoretical discourse and actual practice coincide since members of La Via Campesina are peasants and/or farmers themselves. In post-development, many scholars had been part of the development practice themselves before they became critical of it. The question needs to be asked: How representative are peasants' demands brought forward by peasant interest groups? How do peasants interpret their role and what is the gap between the theoretical claims and the actual demands? What does this tell us about essentialism?

In addition, I would like to emphasize three thematic areas of research which need to be highlighted:

(a) Climate change and the impact on peasant livelihoods: Phenomena linked to climate change, such as a more extreme and less predictable climate and longer periods of drought, have a direct impact on peasant practices and farming. Climate change affects fundamental resources, in particular soil and water. How do people cope with changing conditions and how do they adapt to new technologies?

(b) Information and peasants as decision-makers: Information has become one of the most crucial resources in this contemporary setting. The issue of intellectual property rights is a highly contested arena. What are the legal and institutional frameworks which enable peasants to decide on their own how to share information? Strong farmers' rights, ensuring that the peasant remains a strong agent, might be a solution.

(c) The process of integrating domestic agricultures and the impact on peasant livelihoods: I have demonstrated that the outcome of the process has not been decided yet. At the same time, it is a very fragmentary process. National governments and regional bodies have been reluctant to open up their agricultural sectors. The impact of liberalization is hard to assess. While it might open up

new channels for some farmers, for instance by contract farming, the consequences of highly volatile trade patterns can be devastating. How do we implement the appropriate institutions without marginalizing one group?

7. Conclusion

In this master's thesis, I have focused on descriptions of the peasant and on agricultural change in India since the 1990s. The most important change has been the integration of the domestic agricultural sector into a global free trade commodity market. In the early 1990s the Uruguay Round of the WTO provided the institutional frame for substantial changes in food politics. This meant the elimination of trade barriers, such as tariffs on imports and exports, with the aim of establishing a world-wide free market. Agricultural products were no longer left out of the global trade regime. In India structural adjustment policies were introduced at the beginning of the 1990s. I emphasized the importance of this process by referring to the latest Free Trade Agricultural Agreement between the EU and India. In the 1990s it could no longer be denied that the Green Revolution had been unsustainable. Since then, India's agriculture has been declared in a state of crisis. I outlined how concerns have been raised by economists and environmentalists. In addition, the socio-economic rural structure has come under great stress. Economic growth indicators have decreased significantly. Indebtedness and suicides have become major issues in peasant politics. Degradation of natural resources, in particular of soil and water, has reached critical thresholds, signaling a structural crisis in the agricultural sector.

I concluded that the contours of a post-Green Revolution are far from being decided. What has emerged is a new transnational agricultural space which has provided the context, in which alternative discourses, such as food sovereignty, emerged. Some issues, such as environmental degradation, are not deniable anymore. The question is, if an even more sophisticated technological approach is the appropriate strategy.

This is precisely what the model of the Evergreen Revolution promises. The Evergreen Revolution favors a highly intensive technological approach whilst acknowledging the need to integrate local customs. The proposals for a new Green Revolution signal a consciousness that a new direction needs to be taken to secure the future of agriculture. Nevertheless this does not solve the fundamental question of who should be the central agent in a post-Green Revolution period.

When discussing the question of agency in a post-Green Revolution period, the category of the peasant as a particular entity and the conditions in which this entity is placed become paramount. I introduced the theme of Subaltern Studies because the question of who represents the peasant and the conditions in which the peasant can speak for himself are central to this line of research. Subaltern Studies focused on the institution of history and how the peasant is represented in historiography. The main question is if there is a particular peasant consciousness at all. Acts of documentation, in the case of Subaltern Studies colonial records in particular, and the connection between power and text are themes in Subaltern Studies.

Processes of documentation and the connection between power and text are also at the core of post-development studies. It is argued that the development complex had substantial implications for the identity of the people living in the Third World. Post-development resists a description of the peasant as tied to poverty, backwardness and underdevelopment. Critiques have targeted parts of post-development thinking for its description of development as a monolithic bloc and consequent disregard for the local, fragile and dynamic configuration of development. This has crucial implications for an understanding of the peasant. As outlined in my thesis, the peasant is central to the development complex. Rather than being overwhelmed, the peasant actively reshapes the development complex through resistance, opposition and protest. The notion of hybridity highlights the fact that, far from being opposed to each other, resistance and appropriation by peasants themselves are two sides of the same coin. Post-development highlights the autonomy and agency of the peasant.

This is also evident in food sovereignty. An understanding of the peasant as sovereign is central to this line of thinking. The focus is on the peasant and his/her use of resources. In food sovereignty the peasant is re-established as a political entity with particular rights and demands. Food sovereignty reflects the establishment, since the 1990s, of a privatized transnational agricultural space. The central tenets of food sovereignty are self-sufficiency and small-scale agriculture. Food sovereignty highlights a holistic approach which places the peasant in direct relation to his/her environment. It opposes the logic of the free market and related assumptions. I represented the declaration of the rights of the peasant as a possible way of implementing the demands of the peasant as sovereign. This can only be achieved by establishing an alternative discursive space based on a different vocabulary and practices determined and implemented by the peasants themselves.

In all the three discourses essentialism has been a central issue. Subaltern Studies have been criticized for their essentialist position due to their focus on a particular peasant consciousness. Post-development theorists have targeted the development complex for its presentation of the peasant as defined by a pejorative connotation and a backward social entity. In their defense those thus accused have claimed that post-development in itself is essentialist. This included the accusations directed towards some post-development theorists of romanticizing tradition and neglecting the power relations within the peasantry. Opponents of food sovereignty have questioned food sovereignty's emphasis on self-sufficiency. In addition, by celebrating small-scale agriculture opponents of food sovereignty have argued that food sovereignty romanticizes tradition and neglects the negative aspects of exclusively focusing on self-sufficiency. In particular, the criticism made of Subaltern Studies and post-development, together with the notion of hybridity, have highlighted the fact that the peasant is not outside the process or overwhelmed by it but mediates between the various levels and is a creative agent.

I mentioned above that the process is far from being finished. What needs to be highlighted is the fact that the notion of the Evergreen Revolution is just one of many proposals. At the same

time, within a transnational agricultural space new forums for resistance have emerged. This is evident in the mass movement *La Via Campesina*. Post-development and food sovereignty have opened up new space in which alternatives can be formulated. The declaration of the rights of the peasant is one example. Currently, the divisions between the different parties are deep. On the one hand, there are proponents of small-scale agriculture and peasants' livelihoods as holistic rural lifestyles. On the other hand, there are proponents of an even more technologically sophisticated second Green Revolution who claim that without dramatic production increases food shortages are inevitable. The question of agency is one of the central issues for the future of domestic and global agricultural systems.

References

- Aerni, Philipp, 2011. Food sovereignty and its discontents. *African Technology Development Forum Journal* (= *ATDF Journal*), 8(1/2), pp.23–40.
- Agoramoorthy, Govindasamy, 2008. Can India meet the increasing food demand by 2020? *Futures*, 40(5), pp.503–506.
- Agostino, Ana, 2007. Post-development. Unveiling clues for a possible future. In A. Ziai, ed. *Exploring Post-Development: Theory, Practice, Problems and Perspectives*. New York; Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 197–211.
- Atkins, Peter & Bowler, Ian, 2001. *Food in Society: Economy, Culture, Geography*, London: Hodder Education Publishers.
- Bernstein, Henry & Byres, Terence J., 2001. From Peasant Studies to Agrarian Change. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 1(1), pp.1–56.
- Berry, Wendel, 1990. *What are people for?: Essays*, San Francisco: North Point Press.
- Beuchelt, Tina & Virchow, Detlef, 2012. Food sovereignty or the human right to adequate food: which concept serves better as international development policy for global hunger and poverty reduction? *Agriculture and Human Values*, 29(2), pp.259–273.
- Bhalla, G.S. & Singh, Gurmail, 2009. Economic liberalisation and Indian agriculture: A statewise analysis. *Economic and Political Weekly*, XLIV(52), pp.34–44.
- Borras, Saturnino M., 2009. Agrarian change and peasant studies: changes, continuities and challenges – an introduction. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 36(1), pp.5–31.
- Brass, Tom, 2005. The journal of peasant studies: The third decade. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 32(1), pp.37–41.
- Brooks, Sally, 2005. Biotechnology and the politics of truth: from the green revolution to an evergreen revolution. *Sociologia ruralis*, 45(4), pp.360–379.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh, 1992. Postcoloniality and the artifice of history: Who speaks for “Indian” pasts? *Representations*, 1(37), pp.1–26.
- _____, 2000. Subaltern studies and postcolonial historiography. *Nepantla: Views from South*, 1(1), pp.9–32.
- Chandrasekhar, C.P. & Ghosh, Jayati, 2002. *The market that failed: Neoliberal economic reforms in India*, New Delhi: Leftword.
- Chatterjee, P., 2010. Kolonialgeschichte von unten. Kontroversen über die Vergangenheit prägen bis heute die öffentlichen Debatten. In S. Hansen et al., eds. *Indien. Die barfußige Großmacht*. Berlin: taz Verlags- und Vertriebs GmbH, pp. 78–81+89.
- Chayanov, Alexander, 1966. In: Daniel Thorner, Basile Kerblay, and R. E. F. Smith, eds. *The theory of peasant economy*. Homewood: Richard Irwin for the American Economic Association.

Coleman, William D., Grant, Wyn & Josling, Timothy E., 2004. *Agriculture in the new global economy*, Cheltenham/Northampton: Edward Elgar Pub.

Corbridge, Stuart, 1998. "Beneath the pavement only soil": The Poverty of Post-Development. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 34(6), pp.138–148.

Cotula, Lorenzo, Vermeulen Sonja, Leonard, Rebecca and Keeley, James, 2009. *Land grab or development opportunity? Agricultural investment and international land deals in Africa*, IIED/FAO/IFAD, London/Rome. Available at http://www.ifad.org/pub/land/land_grab.pdf [12th June 2012].

Deccan Development Society, 2012. <http://www.ddsindia.com/www/default.asp> [19th September 2012].

Deininger, Klaus et al., 2010. *Rising Global Interest in Farmland. Can It Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits?*, World Bank, Washington. Available at: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTARD/Resources/ESW_Sept7_final_final.pdf [25th May 2012].

Desmarais, Annette A., 2008. The power of peasants: Reflections on the meanings of La Vía Campesina. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 24(2), pp.138–149.

Dethier, Jean-Jaques & Effenberger, Alexandra., 2012. Agriculture and development: A brief review of the literature. *Economic Systems*, 1(36), pp.175–205.

Escobar, Arturo, 1995. *Encountering development: : the making and unmaking of the Third World* 2012th ed., Princeton, [et al.]: Princeton Univ. Press.

_____. 2007. "Post-development" as concept and social practice. In A. Ziai, ed. *Exploring Post-Development: Theory, Practice, Problems and Perspectives*. 2. New York; Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 18–31.

Esteva, Gustavo, 1992, reprint 2010. Development. In W. Sachs, ed. *The Development Dictionary n. A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, 2nd ed. New York; London: Zed Books, pp. 1–23.

European Commission, 2009. *Food security: understanding and meeting the challenge of poverty*, Brussels. Available at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/infopoint/publications/europeaid/documents/163a_en.pdf [9th June 2012].

Everett, Margaret, 1997. The Ghost in the Machine: Agency in "Poststructural" Critiques of Development. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 70(3), pp.137–151.

FIAN, 2012. *International Declaration of Peasants' Rights*, Geneva. Available at <http://www.fian.org/resources/documents/others/international-declaration-of-peasants-rights/pdf> [10th June 2012: 10:40].

Fairbairn, Madeleine, 2011. Framing Resistance. International Food Regimes & the Roots of Food Sovereignty. In N. Wiebe, H. Wittman, & A. A. Desmarais, eds. *Food Sovereignty. Reconnecting Food, Nature & Community*. Dhaka [et al.]: Pambazuka Press, pp. 15–32.

Ferguson, James, 1990. *The anti-politics machine : "development," depoliticization, and bureaucratic power in Lesotho*, Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (Ed.), 2003. *Trade Reforms and Food Security. Conceptualizing the linkages*, Rome. Available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/y4671e/y4671e00.htm> [14th May 2012; 11:00].

Forum for Food Sovereignty, 2007. *Declaration of Nyéléni*, Nyéléni. Available at <http://www.nyeleni.org/spip.php?article290> [6th June 2012].

Golay, Christophe, 2009. *The Rights of Peasants*, critical report nr.5: right to food, Human Rights Program, Geneva. Available at http://www.cetim.ch/en/documents/report_5.pdf [1st July 2012].

Government of India, 2005a. *Indebtedness of Farmer Households*, Situation Assessment survey of Farmers NSS 59th Round (January-December 2003), New Delhi.

_____, 2005b. *Some Aspects of Farming*, Situation Assessment survey of Farmers NSS 59th Round (January-December 2003), New Delhi.

Guha, Ranajit, 1974. Neel-Darpan: The Image of a Peasant Revolt in a Liberal Mirror. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 2(1), pp.1–46.

_____, 1982, reprint 2010. On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India. In R. Guha, ed. *Subaltern Studies I. Writings on South Asian History and Society*, 8th ed. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 1–8.

Gupta, Akhil, 1997. Agrarian Populism in a Modern Nation (India). In F. Cooper & R. Packard, eds. *International Development and the Social Sciences. Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge 1*. Berkeley: Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, pp. 320–344.

_____, 1998. *Postcolonial developments: agriculture in the making of modern India*, Durham/London: Duke University Press.

Haugen, Hans M., 2009. Food Sovereignty – An Appropriate Approach to Ensure the Right to Food? *Nordic Journal of International Law*, 78(3), pp.263–292.

Herring, Ronald J., 2005. Miracle Seeds, Suicide Seeds, and the Poor. GMOs, NGOs, Farmers and the State. In R. Ray & M. F. Katzenstein, eds. *Social Movements In India: Poverty, Power, And Politics*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, pp. 203–232.

Horlings, Ina & Marsden, Terry K., 2011. Towards the real green revolution? Exploring the conceptual dimensions of a new ecological modernisation of agriculture that could “feed the world.” *Global Environmental Change*, 21(2), pp.441–452.

Human Rights Council, 2010. Res. A/HRC/AC/6/CRP.2. *Preliminary study on the advancement of the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas*, Geneva.

Jabbar, Naheem, 2009. *Historiography and writing postcolonial India*, London; New York: Routledge.

Kahn, Joel S., 1985. Peasant ideologies in the Third World. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, pp.49–75.

Kiely, Ray, 1999. The last refuge of the noble savage? A critical assessment of post-development theory. *The European Journal of Development Research*, 11(June), pp.30–55.

La Via Campesina, 2009. *Declaration of Rights of Peasants, Women and Men*, Available at: [http://viacampesina.net/downloads/DOC/The declaration on the rights of peasants - EN FINAL Final.doc](http://viacampesina.net/downloads/DOC/The%20declaration%20on%20the%20rights%20of%20peasants%20-%20EN%20FINAL%20Final.doc) [19th July 2012].

_____. 2012. <http://viacampesina.org/en/index.php/organisation-mainmenu-44/our-members-mainmenu-71> [20th September 2012].

Lie, Jon H.S., 2007. Post-development and the discursive-agency interface. In A. Ziai, ed. *Exploring Post-Development: Theory, Practice, Problems and Perspectives*. New York; Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 47–62.

Mies, Maria & Shiva, Vandana, 1995. *Ökofeminismus: Beiträge zur Praxis und Theorie*, Zürich: Rotpunkt-Verlag.

Nustad, Knut, 2007. Development. The devil we know? In A. Ziai, ed. *Exploring Post-Development: Theory, Practice, Problems and Perspectives*. New York; Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 35–46.

Paasch, Armin et al., 2011. *Right to Food Impact Assessment of the EU-India Trade Agreement*, Misereor/Third World Network/Anthra/Glopolis/Ecofair Trade Dialogue, Aachen [et al.]. Available at http://www.ecofair-trade.org/sites/ecofair-trade.org/files/downloads/12/02/right_to_food_-_impact_assessment_of_the_eu-india_trade_agreement_web.pdf [1st Mar. 2012].

Packard, Randall & Cooper, Frederick., 1997. Introduction. In F. Cooper & P. Randall, eds. *International Development and the Social Sciences. Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*. London; Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 1–41.

Parayil, Govindan, 2003. Mapping technological trajectories of the Green Revolution and the Gene Revolution from modernization to globalization. *Research Policy*, 32(6), pp.971–990.

Patel, Raj, 2009. Food sovereignty. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 36(3), pp. 663–706.

Persram, Nalini, 2010. Spatial and Temporal Dislocations of Theory, Subjectivity, and Post()Reason in the Geocolonial Politics of Subaltern Studies. *Cultural Studies <=> Critical Methodologies*, 11(1), pp.9–23.

Pingali, Prabhu & Raney, Terri, 2005. *From the Green Revolution to the Gene Revolution: how will the poor fare?*, ESA Working Paper No. 05-09, FAO, Rome. Available at <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/008/af276e/af276e00.pdf> [9th June 2012].

Planning Commission (Government of India), 2002. *10th Five Year Plan 2002-2007. Vol II: Chapt. 5.1.: Agriculture*, New Delhi (publisher not specified). Available online at http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/planrel/fiveyr/10th/volume2/v2_ch5_1.pdf [1st Aug. 2012].

_____. 2008. *11th Five Year Plan 2007-2012. Vol. III: Chapt. 1.: Agriculture*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press. Available online at http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/planrel/fiveyr/11th/11_v3/11v3_ch1.pdf [1st Aug. 2012].

Prakash, Gyan, 1994. Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism. *The American Historical Review*, 99(5), pp.1475–1490.

- Rahnema, Majid, 1998a. Introduction. In M. Rahnema & V. Bawtree, eds. *The Post-Development Reader*. Dhaka [et al.]: Zed Books [et al.], p. ix–xix.
- ___1998b. Towards Post-Development: Searching for Signposts, a New Language and New Paradigms. In M. Rahnema & V. Bawtree, eds. *The Post-Development Reader*. Dhaka [et al.], pp. 377–404.
- Reddy, Ratna, 2003. Land degradation in India: Extent, costs and determinants. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 38(44), pp.4700–4713. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/4414225> [Accessed July 5, 2012].
- Sachs, Wolfgang, 1992, reprint 2010. Introduction. In W. Sachs, ed. *The Development Dictionary. A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, 2nd ed. New York; London: Zed Books, p. xv–viv.
- Sainath, Palagummi, 2010a. Böse Saat in Andhra Pradesh. In S. Hansen et al., eds. *Indien. Die barfüßige Großmacht*. Berlin: Edition Le Monde diplomatique, pp. 54–57.
- ___2010b. Farm suicides: a 12-year saga. *The Hindu*, [online] 22nd Jan. Online at: <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/article94324.ece?homepage=true> [7th July 2012].
- ___2010c. Nearly 2 lakh farm suicides since 1997. *The Hindu*, [online] 25th Jan. Online at <http://www.hindu.com/2010/01/22/stories/2010012258950100.htm> [14th July 2012].
- Sengupta, Ranja, 2012. Ein Abkommen, das Arme noch ärmer macht. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, p.2.
- Seshia, Shaila & Scoones, Ian, 2003. *Tracing policy connections: the politics of knowledge in the Green Revolution and biotechnology eras in India*, Biotechnology Policy Series Nr.188, Institute of Development Studies, Bristol
- Sharma, Ramesh, 2011. Food Sovereignty, Hunger and Global Trade Rules. *ATDF JOURNAL*, 8(1/2), pp.10–17.
- Shiva, Vandana, 1989. *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development*, New Delhi: Zed Books.
- ___1991. *The violence of the green revolution*, London [et al.]: Zed Books [et al.].
- ___2004. The future of food: countering globalisation and recolonisation of Indian agriculture. *Futures*, 36(6-7), pp.715–732.
- Southgate, Douglas, 2011. Food Sovereignty: The Idea's Origins and Dubious Merits. *ATDF JOURNAL*, 8(1/2), pp.18–22.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, 1988. Can the Subaltern Speak? In: C. Nelson & L. Grossberg, eds. *Marxism and the interpretation of culture*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, pp. 271–313.
- Storey, Andy, 2000. Post-Development Theory: Romanticism and Pontius Pilate politics. *Development*, 43(4), pp.40–46.
- Suppan, Steve, 2008. Challenges for Food Sovereignty. *The Fletcher Forum for World Affairs*, 32(1), pp.111–123.

- Swaminathan, Monkombu Sambasivan, 2006. An Evergreen Revolution. *Crop Science*, 46(5), pp.2293–2303. Available at: <https://www.crops.org/publications/cs/abstracts/46/5/2293> [18th June 2012].
- UN-Habitat, 2008. *State of the World's Cities 2010/2011. Bridging the Urban Divide*, Nairobi.
- UNCTAD, 2009. *World Investment Report 2009: Transnational Corporations, Agricultural Production and Development*, Geneva. Available http://unctad.org/en/docs/wir2009_en.pdf [Accessed 1st Mar. 2012].
- UNDESA, 2011. *World Urbanization Prospects, the 2011 Revision*, New York. Available at <http://esa.un.org/unup/> [14th June 2012; 18:57].
- United Nations, 1976. *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, Geneva. Available at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cescr.htm> [1st May 2012].
- Wiebe, N. et al., 2011. *Food sovereignty: reconnecting food, nature & community* A. A. Desmarais, H. Wittman, & N. Wiebe, eds., Cape Town [et al.]: Fernwood.
- Windfuhr, Michael & Jonsén, Jennie, 2005. *Food Sovereignty: towards democracy in localized food systems*, Bourton-on-Dunsmore: ITDG Publishing.
- Wittman, Hannah, 2009. Reworking the metabolic rift: La Vía Campesina, agrarian citizenship, and food sovereignty. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 36(4), pp.805–826.
- Wittman, Hannah, Wiebe, Nettie & Desmarais, Annette A., 2011. The Origins & Potential of Food Sovereignty. In H. Wittman, N. Wiebe, & A. A. Desmarais, eds. *Food Sovereignty. Reconnecting Food, Nature & Community*. Cape Town [et al.]: Pambazuka Press, pp. 1–14.
- Wolf, Eric, 1966. *Peasants*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.
- World Bank, 2007. *World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development*, Washington. Available at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2008/Resources/WDR_00_book.pdf [20th June 2012].
- Yedla, Sudhakar & Peddi, Sowjanya, 2007. Agriculture and Environment. In S. Ray, ed. *Handbook of Agriculture in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 57–104.
- Ziai, Aram, 2007. The ambivalence of post-development. Between reactionary populism and radical democracy. In A. Ziai, ed. *Exploring Post-Development: Theory, Practice, Problems and Perspectives*. New York; Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 111–128.

Curriculum Vitae

David Christopher Bexte
Lilienthalstr.10
10965 Berlin
Tel.: +49306932985
dbexte@gmail.com

Education

Since Mar. 2012	University of Vienna <i>Erasmus Mundus Master of Art</i> <i>“Global Studies”</i> 4 th term Master Thesis	Vienna, Austria
Jul. 2011 – Feb. 2012	Jawaharlal Nehru University <i>Erasmus Mundus Master of Art</i> <i>“Global Studies”</i> 3 rd term abroad	New Delhi, India
Oct. 2010 – Jun. 2011	University of Leipzig <i>Erasmus Mundus Master of Art</i> <i>“Global Studies”</i> 1 st and 2 nd term	Leipzig, Germany
Jul. 2010 – Sep. 2010	Working Camp Aid-Development Organized by Steinschleuder e.V., IDEM & Elu Children Care <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Construction of an assembly hall• Inter-cultural youth exchange	Morogoro, Tanzania
Oct. 2006 – Mar. 2010	Albert-Ludwigs-University <i>Bachelor of Arts</i> <i>Modern History major, Political Science minor</i> Grade: “good” to “very good”	Freiburg i. Br., Germany
Aug. 2008	Working Camp <i>Aid-Development</i> Organized by Steinschleuder e.V. & NAFTEC <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe• Construction of a multi-purpose-building• Inter-cultural youth exchange	Cebu, Philippines
2008	The National Model United Nations	New York, USA
2007	Stiftung Stadtmuseum Berlin <i>Internship</i> et al. Research and preparation for the exhibitions “Berlin 1986” and “Berlin im Licht”	Berlin, Germany
2002 - 2005	Internatsgymnasium Schloss Torgelow <i>Boarding School, Abitur (A-level)</i> Concentrations: Mathematics, German	Torgelow am See, Germany

Grade: “good” to “very good”

Jan. 2004 The Hague International Model United Nations The Netherlands

Work Experience

Jul. 2007 – Mar. 2010 Albert-Ludwigs-University Freiburg i. Br.,
Student Assistant Germany
et al. Helped philosophy faculty members with
extensive work with electronic lecture listings

Jul. 2009 – Feb. 2010 Uniseum Freiburg Freiburg,
Museum guide Germany

Nov.-Dec. 2005 Aids Trust Australia Sydney, Australia
Charity Fundraiser

Oct.-Dec. 2005 Oxfam Australia Sydney, Australia
Oxfam International Youth Parliament Assistant

- Provided administrative support
- Responsible for communications and the database
- Researched for OIYP’s Global Meeting 2007

Language Skills

German native speaker, English proficient, French limited, Spanish limited

Aug. 05 – May 2006 *Work & Travel Australia*

Mar. 02 – Apr. 2002 *Certificate in English as a Foreign Language Valetta, Malta*

Interests

Sailing, chess, tennis, soccer, skiing

Vienna, 27th March 2012

David Bexte