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**From Landlordism to Capitalism
in Turkish Agriculture**

by

A. Adnan Akçay

DPP Working Paper No 12



Development Policy and Practice Research Group

Faculty of Technology

The Open University

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From Landlordism to Capitalism in Turkish Agriculture

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1. Introduction

The main debates about Turkish agriculture concern the overwhelming predominance of owner-occupied smallholdings and the limited incidence of villages dominated by large capitalist farms. For this reason empirical studies concentrate on villages where independent family farms are dominant. Theoretical studies, too, have focussed on the articulation of small commodity producers with nation-wide markets, mostly neglecting the existence of large farms. Though not significant in number, large capitalist farms exist in Turkish agriculture, controlling important areas of land with substantial effects for social structure in the regions where they are concentrated.

This paper analyses the transformation of large landed estates into capitalist farms in two villages in Southeastern Turkey. It is argued that basic differences among Turkish villages are determined by a combination of the pre-existing structure of land tenure and the introduction of modern technology. In other words, pre-existing land distribution patterns primarily determine the available alternative types of land consolidation under the impact of mechanization and market integration. An important concentration of large

agrarian holdings is in the Southeastern region where large landed estates were historically the dominant form of land tenure. Following integration in a capitalist market with the introduction of new technology, feudal relations in Southeastern villages have been transformed as large landholdings have become capitalist farming enterprises.

In the following sections, first the nature of the structural changes contributing to the formation of capitalist holdings in Turkish agriculture (which took place after the Second World War) is briefly outlined. Second, the dominant landownership pattern is examined with some quantitative data, showing the predominance of commercialized family farms with a small number of large capitalist farms. The next two sections describe significant cases of capitalist farming in Turkish agriculture. Two types of capitalist farming are differentiated in terms of their formation processes: The "emergent" type through accumulation of land (which is very rare in Turkish agriculture); and the "transformational" type through a change in the organization of production on existing large holdings.

The fifth section provides an historical explanation of the specificity of Southeastern Anatolia, with special reference to Diyarbakir (where the research villages are located), and a brief discussion of Ottoman land tenure, and landlordism and sharecropping prior to mechanization.

Section six traces the transformation process from landlordism to capitalist farming using empirical material collected in two Southeastern villages in 1981. This shows the marginalisation of traditional sharecropping with the mechanization of agriculture, and the emergent conflict between capital and labour in the specific conditions of the villages. The conclusion suggests how the type of capitalist development represented in the research villages produces specific forms of the social contradictions that are an inevitable outcome of such transformations.

2. Structural Change in Turkish Agriculture after the Second World War

It is commonly agreed that after 1945 there were major structural changes in the rural areas of Turkey. ¹ In particular the rapid mechanization of agriculture dissolved the prior stability of the countryside. The replacement of oxen by tractors in the 1950's, the development of highways, and the establishment of distribution and communication channels connecting villages to the national market, were all part of the process of growing commercialization and transformation of Turkish agriculture.

This can be illustrated by the huge increase in the number of tractors, use of fertilizers, credit supply, the size of land under cultivation, and the construction of highways.

The number of tractors rose from 1,956 in 1948 to 15,588 in 1950, 37,743 in 1954 and 40,282 in 1955. ² There was a similar increase in fertilizer use. While the amount of chemical fertilizers used was 14 thousand tons in 1940, it rose to 138 thousand tons in 1955 and 295 thousand tons by 1962. ³ Pesticides used show similar tendencies for the same years. ⁴

Agricultural credits supplied by the Agricultural Bank of Turkey increased considerably in the same period as well. Net agricultural credit distributed to farmers rose from 237 million TL (Turkish Lira) in 1948, to 1,067 million TL in 1952, and 1,554 million in 1955. ⁵

The introduction of tractors and other equipment extended land under cultivation from 15.4 million ha in 1948 to 24.3 million ha in 1956. ⁶

Concerning roads, the Turkish highway network increased by about 59% between 1949 and 1976, from 37,404 kilometres to 59,616 kilometres. ⁷

These figures indicate the scale of change in Turkish agriculture after 1945. Pre-existing patterns of land ownership within the rural areas were either consolidated or changed, while the social divisions of labour associated with them have inevitably changed. The mechanisms of change and new types of land ownership patterns were significantly conditioned by the former structure of the villages themselves. As Robinson (1952, p.456) pointed out "the general impact of mechanized farming upon the Turkish village community is largely determined by the historical development of that community, its economic basis, geographical position, and social structure".

The consolidation of commercialized family farming with mechanization, described in the next section, was the historical legacy of rural Anatolia where a strong central state and independent peasantry had prevailed for centuries (Keyder, 1982).

The deviations from this dominant form with the emergence of large-scale capitalist farming are analysed subsequently.

3. Dominant Landownership Pattern in Rural Turkey: Commercialized Family Farms

Keyder (1983b) estimated that villages with large capitalist farms account for less than 5% of total villages in Turkey, and are mainly "confined to the Southeastern region with scattered representation in the West and on the Mediterranean coast" (p.45). For him, most other villages (up to four-fifths of the 40,000 in the country) are characterised by what he calls petty commodity production.

In another article Keyder investigated the historical genesis and consolidation of small peasant ownership as the dominant mode of land tenure in Turkey, and concluded that the major transformation in Turkish agriculture from 1945, "eventually fixed the predominantly peasant-proprietor character of the agrarian structure" (1983a, p.141). He

writes that "the reclaiming of land and its distribution; political favouring of the agrarian sector; the spread of mercantile and communications networks and of new technology contributed to the consolidation of (small) peasant ownership" (ibid p.144).

Aresvik (1975), in a similar way to Keyder, writes that "most of Turkey's rural population live on small family farms in Turkey, with an average farm size of nearly 9 hectares (90 decares)" (p.36). Varlier (1978, p.23) calculated that in 1970 88.3% of total agricultural holdings were less than 100 decares and 72.6% were less than 50 decares, cultivating 48.7% and 27.7% of total arable land respectively. Koylin (1947), Fry (1967), Tekeli (1978), Ginar and Silier (1979), Boratav (1981, 1983) and others, all concur that the determinant aspect of Turkish agriculture is the overwhelming predominance of commercialized small family holdings.

Table 1 Number of Holdings and Cultivated Area by Sizes of Holdings in Turkey, 1980

Size of Holdings (decare)	Number of Holdings	% of Total Holding	Agricultural Area (decare)	% of Total Area
1-19	1.102.379	30.1	9.414.313	4.1
20-49	1.164.642	31.9	31.141.573	15.8
50-99	738.376	20.2	48.392.133	21.2
100-199	421.523	11.5	54.244.977	23.8
200-499	193.730	5.3	52.002.284	22.8
500-999	26.407	.07	17.858.013	7.8
1000-2499	2.500	.06	3.507.951	1.5
2500-4999	373	.01	1.214.931	0.5
5000 and above	159	.004	4.779.514	2.0
Total	3.650.910	100	227.640.289	99.5*

Source: Calculated from data in SIS: 1984, p.5

*Less than 100% due to rounding

Table 1 shows that in 1980 82% of holdings were under 100 decares in size, occupying 41% of cultivated land. However, holdings between 100 and 1000 decares, while only 17% of total holdings, occupied over 46% of cultivated land, and this category of holdings undoubtedly incorporates farms of very different kinds. Family farms (petty commodity production) can vary greatly in size according to regional characteristics and type of farming, but it is likely that some farms included in the 100 to 1000 decare band are capitalist farms of the 'emergent' type. The same applies to farms larger than 1000 decares, of which there were 3,032 in 1980, only 0.074% of total holdings but occupying 4% of cultivated land. ⁸

4. Significant Cases of Capitalist Farming in Turkish Agriculture

As noted earlier, two paths of formation of capitalist agricultural enterprises in Turkey are distinguished. In the first, capitalist farms *emerge* through land consolidation/accumulation and capitalisation in areas of family farming: a process of differentiation of petty commodity producers. In the second, historic (feudal) large landholdings are *transformed* into capitalist enterprises through changes in the social relations and technical conditions of production on them.

4.1 'Emergent' Type Capitalist Farming

This type is exemplified by small or medium landholders able to acquire agricultural machinery and to start leasing in land from neighbouring poorer peasants. In many cases these would be farmers who had early initial access, and perhaps advantaged access, to credit and the purchase of tractors in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Over time their effective unit of operation (own land plus land leased in) might become a unit of ownership. The consolidation of this 'emergent' type of capitalist farm then is the acquisition and accumulation of land through competition without significant recourse to extra-economic

mechanisms: in short, a process of differentiation of petty commodity production.⁹

The fact that this kind of differentiation generates very large capitalist farms only exceptionally, has led to the mistaken view in much of the literature that the emergence of capitalist farmers from 'peasant' producers is exceptional, reflecting an exaggerated emphasis on size of holding as the principal criterion of differentiation. The production of high value crops under conditions of considerable capital intensity and/or labour intensity can be an entirely capitalist process (using wage labour) even on medium holdings of 100 to 200 decares. Indications of differentiation producing capitalist farmers of the 'emergent' type are given in a number of studies, including those by Robinson (1952), Hiltner (1960), Aksit (1967), and Hinderink and Kiray (1970).

4.2 'Transformational' Type Capitalist Farming

The main concern of the paper refers to a transformation associated with the effects of modern techniques of production upon already existing concentrated landholdings, in effect a transition from a pre-capitalist ('tribal', 'traditional') organization of production to capitalist production relations. In this case, the landlords whose land was cultivated through sharecropping arrangements begin to farm themselves using agricultural machinery and wage labour, and possibly new forms of sharecropping. This transition commonly involves the use of extra-economic methods by landlords to 'enclose' their holdings as new consolidated units of operation. Such methods range from bare violence to a variety of political means.

It can confidently be claimed that the transformation of large agricultural holdings is largely stimulated by the introduction of modern production techniques. It was not difficult for large landholders to purchase tractors from their rent income or through

credit. With the purchase of machinery large landholders began to enclose their holdings, replacing their traditional sharecroppers and tenants with tractors and wage workers, and also expanding cultivation on to previously unused lands through appropriating common lands and pastures, and sometimes by renting or purchasing land. ¹⁰

This type of transformation took place in a very short time with mechanization in Western, Central and South Anatolia, as the agriculture of these regions was rapidly commercialized, followed more slowly by Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia.

Since pre-existing large land ownership is a condition of this type of transformation, the historical specificity of land tenure and distribution in any given region or locality has a special importance. The next section analyses the historical conditions which gave rise to the existence of large land ownership in Southeastern Anatolia, with a specific emphasis on Diyarbakir province where our research villages are located.

5. Landlordism/Sharecropping in Southeast Anatolia with Special Reference to Diyarbakir Province

This section first describes the dominant form of land tenure system in the Ottoman Empire in order to understand the specificity of Southeast Anatolia, including its various forms of labour utilization prior to mechanization, and concentrating on Diyarbakir Province.

5.1 The Dominant Form of Land Tenure in the Ottoman Empire

In the Ottoman Empire the state was the absolute owner of all land, at least in theory.

Lands owned by the state were called *miri* (crown) lands. ¹¹ The Ottoman land system was based on the institution of *timar*. "Timar was the generic term accorded to a system of land

grants distributed for the purpose of raising and supporting a provincial army. The beneficiaries of the grants were state officials empowered to collect the traditional product-tax of *osr*, in the area designated as their *timar*" (Keyder and Islamoglu 1977, p.38).¹²

Sipahis, as the *timar* holders were called, were not the owners of the land but representatives of the state. Their duty was to collect taxes from the *reaya* (peasants) who had usufructory rights to land, which were inheritable provided that the land was not left uncultivated for three or more successive years (Barkan 1943, p.7). Furthermore, the peasant's freedom of mobility was restricted by the state to certain designated locations (Barkan 1937, p.106, and 1956, pp.237-46). The peasant cultivated the land with his own implements, and each year gave over part of his produce, between one-tenth and one-half of the crop according to the fertility of the land (Sencer 1969, pp.254-8). The *sipahi* was a government official who collected taxes from the producers and provided soldiers for the state in times of war, as well as maintaining social and political order in his assigned region.

As long as central authority remained powerful, it could protect the independent small peasantry (which constituted the base of state revenues) against the centrifugal tendencies of local potentates. However, the *miri* land system in the Empire began to decline from about the second half of the 16th century onwards, mainly due to the weakening of centralized authority.¹³ *Miri* revenue gave way to the *iltizam* (tax farming) system.¹⁴ In the *iltizam* system, introduced to increase the income of the state, the collection of the *osr* (tithe) was sold to *multezims* (tax farmers) who would organize and undertake the tax collection.¹⁵ Peasants were put at the mercy of *multezims*. In some provinces 'local potentates' (or leading notables: *ayans*) and tax farmers consolidated themselves and by 1807 the state was obliged to confirm their positions as landowners.¹⁶

In some parts of the Empire (mainly in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia) there were types of landownership other than *miri* which provided the bases for large landed estates, as the following section shows.

5.2 Deviations from the Miri Land System

The dominant form of landownership particularly in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia were called *serbest mir-i miranlik*, *yurtluk-ocaklik* and *mir-asiretligi*.

Serbest mir-i miranlik were those *sancaks* (Ottoman administrative units) in which ownership of land rested with *beys* (tribal leaders), who recognized the higher sovereignty of the Ottoman state, paying a certain amount of tax and providing soldiers to the state if necessary (Husrev 1934, p.166). Some *beys* were given large estates in return for their support of Sultan Selim against Shah Ismail of Iran in 1514 and the following years. The *sancaks* of these *beys* were called *yurtluk-ocaklik* and were inherited by the children of the *beys*. The Ottoman state could not dismiss these *beys*, nor could it appoint a new *bey* to a *sancak* of this kind. Sencer (1969, p.261) reports that there were eight such *yurtluk-ocaklik sancaks* in Diyarbakir province. *Mir-asiretligi* (tribal leadership) was similar to the system described above. The leaders of these tribal groups had ownership of the land which was inherited by their heirs. There were nearly four hundred *mir-asiretlizi* in Diyarbakir, Van and Sehrizor (ibid, pp.260-5).

The last variant structure, somehow mixed with the *miri* land system, was *malikane-divani* in which ownership of land was left to private persons, but its possession was shared with the state. *Malikane* referred to the private, and *divani* to the state share. This system was practiced in some of the *sancaks* in Central Anatolia, but especially in the eastern provinces including Diyarbakir (Faroqui 1977, p.59).

As can be derived from these brief descriptions, lands given or recognised in different forms as private property were the basis of a different structure of landholding and distribution, of which remnants still exist in East and Southeast Anatolia. These gained importance especially from the sixteenth century as the Ottoman State gradually lost its centralised power. The inability of the central authority to control its provinces led to a consolidation of the power of local potentates against the peasantry, particularly in the nineteenth century. In the same period, the southeastern tribal notables were able to gain private ownership over almost all land.

A similar trend occurred in lands settled by formerly nomadic tribes in the latter part of the nineteenth century: ".....in the Southeast rigid tribal structures were transformed into feudal arrangements where the chief became the landlord and the members of the tribe his serfs" (Keyder 1982, p.12). Following the War of Independence and the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, private property in land was confirmed in 1926. Tribal notables and leaders in possession of large land holdings were now confirmed as their legal owners in modern Turkish law (Kazgan 1966, p.30).

5.3 Diyarbakir Province

For Diyarbakir province in particular the historical specificity described above is emphasized by Yalman (1971) who provides very useful material on landlord dominated villages. Yalman stresses that "the legal foundation of the agrarian system of Diyarbakir lies in the recess of Ottoman economic history. It is claimed in Diyarbakir that the present titles to the large landed estates so characteristic of the province are based on Ottoman *ferman* probably of the nineteenth century" (p.184). A significant event in the nineteenth century concerning the legal status of land was the revocation of the *timar* system in 1831 in order to provide new revenues for the treasury. Yalman writes that "after the revocation of the *timar* system it appears that there were increasing sales of *miri* land as *mulk*

(individual property) in the nineteenth century. The purchaser was given a deed called '*tapu temessuku*'. The *tapu temessuku* became a title deed, and the laws were successively modified to permit the inheritance of these estates by sons and daughters and other relatives" (ibid, p.186).

There were also attempts to revive the power of central authority, such as the land law of 1858 prohibiting the acquisition of whole villages as estates by an individual. However, as claimed by Yalman, the 1858 land law and other measures "seems to have accomplished exactly the opposite of what had been intended" (ibid, p.186). "The (1858) *ferman* of the Sultan, which in the past entitled the holder of an estate to draw only a certain share of the produce from the land allotted to him, now, probably under the influence of European land codes, turned him into landlord with full freehold tenure, (and) turned the tenant farmer into a serf" (ibid, pp.186-7).

Thus the basis of the present social organization of land in the region was consolidated in the nineteenth century. After the foundation of the Turkish Republic and the recognition of private property in land, those who had an Ottoman *tapu* (title deed) were accepted as the legal owners of the land. Similarly, those peasants who could prove their usufructory rights to land were given legal title to it.

Contemporary rural structures in the region are thus characterised by the co-existence of large estates and small peasant holdings (Aydin 1980). For this reason some sociologists have categorized villages by whether a whole village is owned by a landlord or by the village residents. This distinction goes back to the pioneer of Turkish sociology Ziya Gokalp who categorized the villages around Diyarbakir as *Aga Koyu*, landlord villages, and *Akali Koyu*, 'inhabitants' villages'.¹⁷

Present-day large capitalist holdings in Diyarbakir are mostly the descendants of these various structures specific to the area. According to Cinar and Silier (1979), the Southeastern region (comprising nine provinces) has about 32% of total large agricultural holdings in Turkey, with the greatest concentration in Diyarbakir. Aras (1956) reported that in Diyarbakir there were 642 holdings of between 500 and 5,000 decares, with another 52 holdings of above 5,000 decares.

The fact of large land ownership may be best observed on the village level, since there are still a number of families who own one or more villages in the region. According to the Village Inventory surveys (carried out by the Ministry of Village Affairs, between 1963-1971) out of a total of 663 villages in Diyarbakir province, 476 belonged to inhabitants of the village, 38 to individuals, 27 to families and 31 to *sulales* (landlord families) (KIB 1966, pp.66-7, Table 31). The same source for Bismil sub-district (which includes our two villages) shows a similar trend: of a total of 87 villages 58 were owned by villagers, 15 by individuals and 14 by families.

An important aspect of large land (and/or village) ownership is the absenteeism which is quite widespread in Southeast Anatolia. Big land holders mostly dwell in towns and cities with their farms run through agents (managers) and sharecroppers. Ivanolik (1951) noted villages around Diyarbakir owned by city-dwelling landlords with their farms run by a manager called *nazir*. (This is also the case in one of our research villages.) Some of these absentee landlords invest in non-agricultural areas and commercial activities, transportation, real estate speculation, shops, etc.

According to the Village Inventory Surveys of 1966, 1,743 absentee families controlled a significant amount of the total land in Diyarbakir province, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Land owned by absentees in Diyarbakır in 1966

District	Number of Absentee Families	Number of Fragments	Total Area (decares) controlled by Absentee Families
Central	522	6.689	824.128
Bismil	190	2.394	438.173
Çermik	133	670	61.367
Çinar	99	1.665	365.017
Çüngüş	1	4	14
Dicle	43	234	5.049
Ergani	279	1.813	102.343
Hani	49	101	1.210
Hazro	184	1.000	29.178
Kulp	14	79	535
Lice	75	1.255	118.961
Silvan	151	1.496	337.578
Total	1.743	17.400	2.283.548

Source: KIB: 1966, p.64

The table shows that in Bismil district, of a total of 87 villages 50 contained land owned by 190 absentee families amounting to 438,173 decares or 28.8% of the total arable land in Bismil.

5.4 Forms of Traditional Sharecropping in Southeast Anatolia

In this context landlordism denotes a system of agricultural production on large holdings cultivated by *yaricis* (sharecroppers) and *marabas* (propertyless sharecroppers) controlled by the land owners or *agas*.¹⁸ In Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, an important amount of, and sometimes the whole of, *aga* holdings were cultivated in various forms of tenancy arrangements called *ortakçilik* (sharecropping).

Aras (1956) writes that sharecropping was not the only form of labour utilization on large landholdings. There were also labourers called *maraba* or *azab* who worked on the domain land of the landlord. The *maraba* was a peasant producer working with implements belonging to the *Aga*, who was paid one-fourth of the produce. *Azabs* were landless agricultural labourers personally dependent on the landlord who supplied them with food and shelter. They were generally paid in kind, and sometimes were allowed to cultivate a small plot of land on their own account, using the implements of the landlord in lieu of any other payment (Aras 1956, pp.24-5). Alongside *marabas* and *azabs* there was a similar type of labour utilization in the Diyarbakir area called *sikarte*. In this the landlord gave peasant families a plot of land and some seed to cultivate on their own account, in return for labour services over a period of nine months (*ibid*).

Yaricilik was the basis of various sharecropping arrangements.¹⁹ In this form, the landowner gives land, shelter and seed, and in some cases credit also if the peasant is unable to operate his land. This debt is repaid in cash or in kind according to the agreement. Other production expenses and all labour inputs are the sharecropper's responsibility. After harvest the produce is divided into two equal parts.

Another arrangement was called *icare*, in which all expenses including seed plus necessary labour inputs are provided by the sharecropper. This reduces the landlord's direct connection with production (not supplying seed), and his share of the harvest is between one tenth and one fifth. (Aras noted this kind of sharecropping in the villages of Diyarbakir province, and in some of the villages in Mardin province.)

Another type of sharecropping arrangement called *cariyek* (meaning 'quarter' or 'one-fourth'), combines features of *yaricilik* and *icare*. Half of the seed and equipment is provided by the landowner and the other half by the sharecropper. After the harvest, first

landlord and sharecropper get one-fourth of the crop each. Then one-sixteenth is deducted as the rent (*ıcar*) of the land for the landlord, and the rest is divided equally. Aras (1956) suggests that this practise was not widespread, and mostly restricted to Diyarbakir province.

With agricultural mechanization in the 1950's, landlords tried to get rid of their traditional sharecroppers and to enclose their holdings. This was an uneven process. Some landlords succeeded in enclosing their farms, but there are still some who give at least part of their land to traditional sharecroppers because of socio-political constraints on them.

According to the Village Inventory Surveys for Diyarbakir province, the most prevalent form of sharecropping in the 1960s was one in which the landlord provided land only, with all remaining inputs plus labour provided by the sharecropper paying one-eighth of the harvest to the landowner (KIB 1966, p.66). In another arrangement observed in the Survey, the land and seed were provided by the landlord, with the product divided into two equal shares. This was probably used for the cultivation of high value cash crops like tobacco and watermelon.

The extent of sharecropping in Diyarbakir in the mid-1960s is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 The extent of sharecropping in Diyarbakir in 1966

District	Number of Villages	Number of Farming Families	Landless Families			Proportion of S. cropping Landless Families (%)	Proportion of Landless Families to Farming Families (%)
			Number of Landless Families	Number of Share-croppers	Number of Tenants		
Central	118	9.960	6.250	3.247	-	51.9	62.7
Bismil	87	6.249	4.600	2.156	-	46.8	73.1
Çermik	66	4.920	1.448	186	-	12.8	29.4
Çinar	49	4.083	2.976	842	-	28.2	72.9
Çüngüs	33	2.459	453	-	-	0.0	18.4
Dicle	35	4.311	1.397	73	-	5.2	32.4
Ergani	71	5.776	2.298	679	-	29.5	39.8
Hani	17	1.759	458	141	-	30.7	26.0
Hazro	21	2.025	806	212	-	26.3	39.8
Kulp	48	4.812	1.526	119	-	7.7	31.7
Lice	54	5.073	1.738	98	-	5.6	34.0
Silvan	64	5.620	2.800	771	-	27.5	49.8
Total	663	47.420	26.750	8.524	-		

Source: KIB: 1966, op.cit., p.63 (re-arranged)

As will be seen in the next section, large landowners in the region still continue to give some of their lands to sharecropping (although to a smaller extent after mechanization) for different reasons. For instance, they may give some of their less productive land to sharecroppers in order to secure a readily available labour force for peak seasons (Aydin 1980). More importantly, they may be forced to give at least some land to their traditional sharecroppers, because of the strength of political opposition in some villages.

6. From Landlordism to Capitalist Farming: The Cases of Sinan and Korukçu Villages

The villages of Sinan and Korukçu are located in Bismil sub-district of Diyarbakır province. Sinan village has a population of nearly 1,000 people in over 100 households. Its total arable land is about 30,000 decares which are mostly under cereals with some cotton and tobacco. There are 13 tractors, 2 combines and some other agricultural equipment. Korukçu village is smaller in terms of both population and area, as well as its potential for accumulation. It has a population of nearly 300 people in over 40 households. There are about 15,000 decares of arable land with a similar cropping pattern to Sinan. Korukçu contains three tractors.

There is a landlord family in each village which owns all the land and agricultural machinery. The villagers are landless peasants some of whom have traditional sharecropping arrangements with the landlords. Although there is evidence of state owned land as well as some disputed land, all the land in the two villages is under the landlords' control.

The ancestors of these landlord families were tribal leaders in their respective areas during Ottoman rule. After the introduction of private property in land, they became landlords through reducing their followers to serfs. Later they were to transform themselves into capitalist farmers with the increasing commercialization and mechanization of agriculture, which also entailed the marginalization of former sharecropping practices.

While the histories of the two villages follow the same path of transformation, there are important variations between them as well. To grasp these differences and to concretize the general argument, in each case we discuss the specific historical features of the village before proceeding to its present characteristics.²⁰

6.1 Sinan: historical outline

Sinan village is an old settlement going back some 300 years, and formerly populated by Christian ethnic minorities. The landlord family (and its tribe) which would later take the name of Sinanli, arrived in the area in the 1880's with their large flocks of sheep. They are supposed to originate in Mus province neighbouring Diyarbakir. Possibly they were a nomadic tribe, forced or bribed to settle in the area by the Ottoman central administration.

How the tribe gained control of Sinan as well as other parts of the area is not known exactly. Their settlement in the area was probably tied to some grant of state lands, and they were able to purchase some land from Christian villagers in Ottoman times, prior to the War of Independence.

During the Turkish War of Independence when Christians abandoned the region completely, numerous villages including Sinan fell under the control of the Sinanli family. Land was probably appropriated by other prestigious families of the same tribe as well. For instance, one villager said that his grandfather used to have 2,000 decares of land. Today, however, the Sinanlis have sole control of the land in the village, despite lingering disputes over land. In fact, both *de jure* ownership and *de facto* possession of village lands have always been disputed, as confirmed by the district administration.

The basis of contesting Sinanli ownership and control is the claim that most of the land in the village is in fact state property. Land opened for cultivation during the 1960's, after the introduction of tractors, and common pastures incorporated by the landlord, were clearly state property. Cultivation of (at least some of) this state land was legalized through a rental arrangement in which portions are rented annually from the state on a regular basis.

With the departure of the Christians in the early 1920s, the tribal chief consolidated his position as a landowner with his followers as sharecroppers. Sharecropping arrangements from this period onwards were well remembered by the old people in the village. The plots farmed by each household were fairly comparable then, so that there was no friction between households.

There were at least two kinds of sharecropping arrangement in Sinan. In the usual (or "traditional") sharecropping, land only was provided by the landlord who got one-eighth or one-tenth of the product in kind, and villagers had virtually hereditary rights of possession on the plots they cultivated. Since there was always uncultivated land prior to mechanization, newly married couples were given some land by the landlord. When fathers died, possession rights were inherited by older sons (if siblings were living together), or evenly distributed among adult sons (if they were separated from each other). Today, this form of sharecropping is still practiced albeit on much reduced areas.

In the other type of sharecropping arrangement, called *mellabayi*, the landlord provided land, draught animals and seed, for three-quarters of the harvest, with sharecroppers retaining only a quarter.

From the 1920's to the 1950's most village land was cultivated through sharecropping. However, the landlord retained some land as a kind of domain, which was farmed through a form of corvée labour, called *su(k)hra*, that lasted until the late 1950's.

In *su(k)hra*, the village headman or watchman would announce that the landlord required labour the next day and that nobody should leave the village. Everyone was forced to participate in *su(k)hra* with disobedience punished by beating or expulsion from the village. Villagers thus had to go to plough the landlord's fields while their own were neglected. During the cotton picking season particularly, all villagers, women and

children included, had to harvest the landlord's cotton. In *su(k)hra* the peasants' labour was completely unremunerated, and they even had to bring their own food to the fields.

This form of forced labour for approximately 30 days each year was abolished "15-20 years ago as a result of government criticism and the awakening of the villagers," as older people of Sinan put it. (The abolition of *su(k)hra* might have also been encouraged by mechanization and changes in crop patterns: from cotton, which necessitates huge amounts of labour in the picking season, to the lower labour demands of grain cultivation.)

Until the introduction of tractors in the 1950's, villagers were able to subsist on the land they sharecropped with their own oxen, implements and family labour. Since the landlord depended almost exclusively upon their labour, each household in the village was given enough land for their subsistence. There does not seem to have been much conflict between landlord and villagers despite the exactions of *su(k)hra*. In fact, before mechanization the scarce factor was not land but labour.

However, with the introduction of tractors, this relatively stable structure began to dissolve. Increasing mechanization and commoditization of agriculture from the 1950's reversed the previous weights of labour and land in the organization of production, and led to a change in the nature of sharecropping arrangements both quantitatively and qualitatively. The land given out to sharecroppers was reduced, and some families were driven out of the village because of the ensuing conflicts between villagers and landlord.

6.2 Sinan: the transformation to capitalist agriculture

The first tractor, a Massey-Harris provided through Marshall Aid, arrived in the village in 1955. Between 1955-1965 the landlord acquired two additional tractors from his own

profits and with the help of bank credit. The replacement of oxen drawn wooden ploughs by tractors accelerated between 1965 and 1968 when the landlord bought seven more tractors. Subsequently he bought two more tractors in 1975, another in 1979 and another in 1980. In 1981 he owned 12 tractors, 2 harvesters, 8 tractor drawn ploughs, 6 disc-harrows, 2 tractor drawn hoes, 4 grain drills, 2 cultivators, 2 engine driven sprayers, 6 motor pumps for irrigation, and other equipment. He is also a building contractor owning 6 bulldozers which are also used in the village for digging and maintaining irrigation canals.²¹ He started irrigation in early 1970's using the water of a nearby stream, and underground water extracted with motorpumps. When necessary he hires airplanes for spraying insecticides and pesticides. He also owns 2 pick-ups, a Land Rover, and 4 cars for his private use.²²

Using his initial and then expanding stock of machinery, the landlord was able to build and extend the size of his enterprise, first on his own domain, then by incorporating and farming formerly unused land and common pasture, and further by reducing the area given out to sharecroppers. He refused to grant land to newly married couples and expelled existing sharecroppers from the village whenever he could. By the beginning of 1970's most land formerly cultivated by sharecroppers was in a sense "enclosed" by the landlord. As we will see below, both economic and extra-economic means were used to effect this "enclosure" process.

During the same period there was an associated change in the crop pattern. Although cotton is more valuable than grain it involves far more workers whose supervision in production, let alone their possible organization and resistance, can be problematic. The landlord gave up cotton cultivation in 1975 to concentrate on cereals, whose cultivation is highly mechanized and involves a minimum of labour.

Since the landlord now wants to avoid direct involvement with the villagers, a specific type

of tenancy has begun to be practiced for the cultivation of labour-intensive high value cash crops such as tobacco and watermelon. This type of tenancy, called *cenanlik*, involves a two stage sharecropping arrangement. The landlord rents plots to outsiders who in turn find sharecroppers from inside the village. The first sharecropper is called *patron* (= 'boss', usually an outsider) and the second contractor *cenan* (= 'friend', usually from the village). In this arrangement, ploughing and irrigation are undertaken by the *patron*, while the *cenan* supplies the fertilizer and all the necessary manual labour. The crop is then equally shared between the *patron* and the *cenan*. In other words, one-fourth of the total produce goes to the landlord, one-fourth to the first contractor (*patron*), and half to the second contractor (*cenan*).

All these changes in the technology and organization of production, including the diversification of the landlord's activities and his "enclosure" of village land, inevitably changed the social structure of the village, breaking traditional ties between the villagers and the landlord. Some villagers explain this transformation in terms of generational differences in the landlord family. The older generation of landlords are characterized as paternalistic and moderate in their demands while today's generation (beginning after mid 60's) are seen as selfish and insatiable.

This conventional wisdom reflects at least part of the story. C.S., the current landlord who controls Sinan village, is a young man, born in 1953, educated in England as a chemical engineer, secular in his views, and who has almost nothing to do with the traditional social relations of a village community. He is not only socially aloof, but also mostly absent from the village, visiting it mainly during the harvest period.

Otherwise the farm is managed by a *nazir* (overseer or manager), with whom the villagers usually deal. He organizes and supervizes production, and because of his privileged status can exercise considerable power over the villagers in a "relatively autonomous" way. He is

not a native of the village, but an outsider.

Former relations between the landlord and the villagers weakened and were transformed through conflicts particularly from the mid-1960's onwards with the beginning of the transformation process. The initial phase of mechanization from 1965 to 1968 started to undermine prevailing sharecropping arrangements. Villagers who opposed the landlord were denied land to sharecrop. Often they were beaten, their houses shot at and even destroyed by bulldozers.

Although there were (and remain) some villagers who can get land from the landlord, their ability to do so depends heavily on his political consent. The landlord's refusal to honour hereditary rights to sharecrop constituted the main reason for disputes, with allocation of land becoming a mechanism of political patronage and control. For example, those who voted for the social-democratic Republican's People Party were expelled from the village in 1977. One of our respondents told us that his mother's brother was a victim, whose house was fired at and then levelled by bulldozers since he voted for the RPP.

Thus opponents of the landlord were first deprived of access to land, then driven out of the village usually by the use or threat of violence. The worst case was the death of a young village shepherd in 1978, shot by the landlord's brother's son, whose reputation for torturing villagers was well known. The reason for the murder is not clear. According to the villagers, the young man was "very clever and conscious", or "very handsome; landlords do not like handsome villagers". His family was expelled from the village after the murder. This suggests that there could be other reasons for the killing. We were told that after the murder a protest meeting was held in Bismil of nearly 10,000 people. One respondent claimed that after this meeting about 25 more families were expelled from the village. ²³

6.3 Sinan: the contemporary situation

(a) Agricultural Production

Today most villagers lack access to sufficient land for family subsistence, which they specify as 150 decares. 16 villagers out of 20 interviewed had access to land through traditional sharecropping (six cases) or *cenan* (six cases) or both (four cases). The largest plot was 150 decares and the smallest 4 decares, with an average of 32 decares. Share payment is one-tenth on land rented directly from the landlord, and one-half in the case of the *cenanlik*. Nine of the sharecroppers cultivated all the land at their disposal, while the other seven cultivated half with the other half fallow.

Ten sharecroppers had 'traditional' rights to plots inherited from their fathers. Most of the *cenan* sharecroppers obtained land from patrons who were outsiders, but the biggest single *patron* is the village headman, who sharecrops 800 decares of the landlord's land with a number of villagers.²⁴ Grain cultivation constitutes the largest part of village agriculture, and is for subsistence on the part of sharecroppers. The cultivation of watermelon, tobacco, and to a lesser extent vegetable growing may act as sources of cash income. The households interviewed cultivated mainly wheat and/or barley (twelve cases). Others grew purely commercial crops, in order of importance melons, tobacco and vegetables. Two cultivated watermelon only, one tobacco only, and a third tobacco together with barley. Three cultivated tomatoes and other vegetables.

A two-year rotation is usual in Sinan, with the half of the plot left fallow used for pasture. Some households have to cultivate all the land at their disposal due to the smallness of their holdings. Apart from this fallow pattern there is no crop rotation, including on the landlord's farm (wheat, barley and to a smaller extent tobacco, watermelon, chickpeas and sesame seed). As noted before, until 1975 he also cultivated cotton. Hoeing and harvesting

activities requiring large amounts of labour, were performed by temporary workers from outside the village. The *nazir* reported that these labourers were so much trouble that the landlord switched to the mechanized production of wheat and barley. Crops are sold either to the TMO (State Buying Agency) nearby, or State Monopoly (tobacco), or to private merchants and grocers depending on the prices they offer. There is no specialized merchant residing in the village; each producer markets his own products.

Agriculture in Sinan today is fully mechanized on all grain land whatever the size of holding. Sharecroppers rent tractor and harvester services from the landlord. There is no use of draught animals or wooden ploughs except for watermelon sowing which necessitates the use of a wooden plough drawn by horses.

As an inseparable aspect of mechanization the landlord has begun to employ a small number of permanent, and a larger number of temporary, labourers. According to his *nazir*, the permanent employees are 1 *nazir* (overseer), 5 tractor drivers, 1 cook, and 1 herder who have annual contracts, verbally agreed and without any legal documentation. Temporary workers are 5 workers for 15-20 days for applying fertilizer; 6 workers for 40-45 days for loading pesticides and seeds into the drills; 8 workers for 25-30 days during the harvest. These figures were possibly understated by the *nazir*. Villagers claim that a large number of temporary workers are recruited from outside the village, contrary to the *nazir's* claim. Of sharecroppers in the sample, three hired temporary labour. One with 25 decares of land hires 2-3 workers for hoeing the tobacco for 3-4 days, and 2-3 workers for one and a half months for the harvest. Another cultivated 15 decares of watermelon in 1980 and hired two labourers for ten days from the village. A third household that grows vegetables hired 4 labourers for 4 days for various tasks.

Villagers with livestock have to hire shepherds jointly with other livestock owners. The

shepherd is usually paid in kind, receiving a half *ölcek* of wheat and a half *ölcek* of barley a year (one *ölcek* equals 21 kg) for each animal tended.

(b) Animal Husbandry

Animal husbandry is an important supplementary source of income for the peasants in Sinan. No one in the village has sufficient animals to depend totally on them for subsistence. Animals are kept mostly for their milk, and for sale if a need for extra cash arises. The main constraint on keeping animals is land, especially as village pasture has been cultivated by the landlord. The landlord allows villagers to use his fallow land to graze their animals, but this area is not enough and so there is a problem of finding sufficient fodder.

The animal population in the village consists mostly of sheep, about 2,000 sheep in total. The landlord owns the largest number (80), and the headman is the second biggest owner (70). The number of animals owned by village households ranges from 3 to 50. There are 7 households which keep cows for milk (five with one cow, one with two, and one with five cows). One household owns 2 horses, mainly used for transportation (drawing a cart), as well as ploughing land for watermelon cultivation.

It seems that there is no improved livestock breeding in the village, with animals and animal products tended and prepared in traditional ways. There is no specialization in the production or marketing of animal products either, nor any organization such as a co-operative or connection with a merchant on a regular basis. All households owning animals make yoghurt, cheese and butter, and about once a week take their products to Batman, Bismil or Diyarbakir markets to sell. Wool production provides some regular incomes each year, as does the sale of lambs. Animal husbandry is a key source of subsistence, as well as cash income for those households with livestock.

(c) Migration

In addition to livestock, migration, whether 'permanent' or 'temporary', is one of the main supports for the viability of Sinan village. The analysis of migration and its mechanisms is of vital importance in understanding both the economy and socio-political structure of the village.

Most migration is out-migration from the village, particularly from the mid-60's onwards, linked with the mechanization of agriculture and capitalist transformation, which displaced most of the labour previously supplied by sharecroppers. The latter increasingly had to find permanent or seasonal employment outside the village.

Even those with access to some land attempt to find seasonal or permanent jobs because of insufficient income from agriculture. To reproduce itself the peasant household requires supplementary income. Furthermore, the size of sharecropped plots and the seasonality of farming do not provide year-round employment. In short, a combination of low incomes, the nature of agricultural activity, and insufficient (or lack of) access to land, push people out of the village.

In addition to these general economic pressures there have been expulsions of villagers opposed to the landlord's 'enclosures', as noted earlier. Around 25 families were expelled from the village in the 1970's by the landlord's terror or threat of it. One villager expelled was sharecropping 20 decares and also had some animals. He had to sell his animals, and took his family to Diyarbakır to live with his two married daughters who had settled there some years before. He and his family stayed there for one and a half years while he and his sons scraped together a living as peddlers and casual building labourers. Then with his wife and youngest son, he migrated to Zilek hamlet of Sinan to be nearer the village. Shortly after their arrival the military takeover of 12th September 1980 occurred and they were

able to resettle in the village itself.

Compulsory or politically induced migration - like labour migration - can be permanent or temporary. For example, Y.T. was punished with staying at least one month outside the village after his election as a first member of the *Ihtiyar Heyeti* (Village Council) in 1980, for opposing the *nazir*. (He spent this month in the town of Batman, and was forced to resign from his post on his return to Sinan.) Others expelled from the village were able to return after 12 September 1980, but some chose to remain in the nearby villages or towns they had gone to, and where they had established themselves. No doubt some of those expelled still have an expectation of returning to their original homes one day.

A common pattern for people from Sinan is to set up house in one of the big cities, while keeping a base in the village. Since most villagers face insecurity in both village and urban life, this strategy enables them to deal with any unexpected changes in life conditions in either location. There are various ways in which this pattern is organized, but typically some members of the family (elders, women and children) stay permanently in the village and young men spend most of their time in the city and in temporary or semi-permanent jobs. All family members come to the village when labour is needed, generally in the harvest season, and then return to the city.

There are also cases in Sinan of wives and children staying in the village with husbands permanently employed in towns. These workers come to the village for only a few days every three or four months and during holidays. Usually these households are not engaged in agricultural production, and the village is a residential rather than economic location for them.

Levels of out-migration from Sinan are very high. Of 20 households investigated only two

households do not have members who are labour migrants. The heads of 12 households have been or still are labour migrants and it is most common for fathers to be replaced as migrants by one or more sons when they are old enough. Most labour migrants from Sinan go to the nearest urban centres of Bismil, Batman and Diyarbakir, while the Cukurova region attracts seasonal workers in agriculture. A few migrants have gone longer distances to major urban centres such as Balikesir, Bursa, Ismir, Ankara, Istanbul, Adana and Zonguldak.

Labour migrants with more permanent jobs tend to work for state agencies such as the State Tobacco Monopoly, TPAO (State Petroleum Company), DSI (State Water Agency), TCK (State Road Company), or for the municipalities of Bismil, Batman and Diyarbakir. Building and road construction works are the two main non-agricultural fields that offer employment for unskilled seasonal migrants. There are also some cases of employment in skilled or semi-skilled jobs such as driving or maintenance work on construction machines. Marginal activities such as street vending are another area of non-agricultural casual employment. Working as cotton hoers and pickers is the main form of seasonal agricultural employment through migration to the great cotton plains of the Cukurova valley in the hinterland of Adana.

Even permanent emigrants from Sinan usually keep their ties with the village. Temporary or permanent migrants send money to their families in the village when they can, which depends on their type of employment and the nature of the relation with relatives in the village. However, regardless of remittances it seems all migrants receive various kinds of food from the village. People who have migrated before (friends or close relatives) provide contacts for new migrants. Daughters who married and migrated to urban centres are important in providing accommodation and helping to find a job for male relatives coming from the village.

(d) Other activities

There are not many possibilities of diversification in Sinan, particularly in extra-agricultural activities such as weaving carpets or rugs. Most villagers are involved in activities related to farming and animal husbandry to some extent, including those who work for the landlord as tractor drivers, shepherds and temporary labourers. At the nearby State Buying Agency (TMO) about 20 jobs in loading grain are available for two or three months every year.

There are 3 general stores, 1 *tuhafiyeci* and 1 coffee house in the village run by village residents. 5 horse-drawn carts in the village are used for general transportation including taking passengers to the nearby train station, but horses are used principally for ploughing and cultivating watermelons. Even though a stream passes by the village, fishing is regarded more as an 'amateur sport' than a productive activity that could be used as a source of income. Another subsidiary source of income for some households is collecting licorice root, which provides a petty cash income. One household markets licorice root, paying 3.5 TL/kg and selling for 4 TL/kg to the merchant in Batman.

(e) Sinan: an overall evaluation

Restructuring of global and national divisions of labour following the Second World War had its effects for the village of Sinan. The introduction of tractors, the valorization of agriculture through the expansion of commodity production, changes in land and labour use, the formation of wage labour, changes in cropping, the initiation of enclosures to create a quasi-monopolistic enterprise, the marginalization and expulsion of traditional sharecroppers, all started in the 1950's and gathered momentum especially during the second half of the 1960's.

In these decades the process of transformation is not yet complete. The attempts of the landlord to enclose his domain have not been fully achieved. Although the old sharecropping relations no longer exist, there are still ostensibly 'traditional' sharecroppers whose fathers cultivated the same plots. By contrast, in the same region there are other examples of transformation where entire villages have been enclosed by landlords, and only households of wage workers remain. In Sinan, this has been prevented or at least delayed by the resistance of the villagers, and political constraints on the landlord.

The villagers' 'subsistence strategy' through agriculture and animal husbandry or temporary labour migration - or through combining them - frustrates the landlord's project. Although exposed to pressure and even terrorism by the landlord, many villagers have continued to hang on in the village. Those who were expelled, settled nearby in the hope of returning. The villagers retain an expectation of the distribution of state land among the dispossessed, and the opening up to them of village pasture. Such hopes, in fact, constitute the main reference points of their resistance.

7. Korukçu Village: Another Path of Transformation

7.1 Korukçu: History

The area in which Korukçu is located was populated by Turkomans until the turn of the twentieth century, when the Turkoman tribe (called Gavurogulları) was driven out of the village by another tribe coming from Kulp (a small town near Diyarbakir). After bloody fighting Korukçu came under the control of the latter. Hasan *Aga*, the ancestor of today's landlord family (four generations ago) first settled in Kurmuslu village in the late nineteenth century and he and his tribe extended their domination over 10 or 12 villages in the region including Korukçu.

Hasan *Aga* was said to be an educated man. His success is attributed by the elders of the village to his cleverness and particularly his ability to speak Turkish. This was emphasized, since very few in Diyarbakir could speak Turkish at that time. This enabled him to develop good relations with the Ottoman authorities, and he was able to dominate native villagers through deploying both his personal retinue and official forces. ²⁵

After Hasan *Aga's* death the adult males of his family each gained control of one of the villages. Korukçu village was passed by inheritance to *Haci Suleyman Efendi*, together with some share in some of the other villages. One of his two sons, *Necim Efendi*, was the father of three brothers who today dominate Korukçu. *Necim* (died 1935) together with his brother *Edip* who survived him, continued to run the village as their father had through sharecropping.

Today the family (*Vural*) which owns Korukçu village also owns 7 other villages in the same area, wholly or partly, with 150 fields in the villages neighbouring Korukçu. The control of these villages is 'evenly' distributed within the family: all adult males have a whole village or large part of one at their disposal, with some share in other villages. There is almost no partition through inheritance. They try to keep the unity of farms, since if they were divided (or sold) female members of the family would be entitled to shares both by tradition and by law. Although the father of the present-day landlords died in 1935 they have not divided the land but distributed it among themselves as separate farms. Presently, the harvest of Korukçu village is equally divided between the brothers *Selahattin* and *Ali Vural*, and their paternal cousin *Edip Yamaner*. The third brother *Mehmet Vural* who is the headman of Korukçu does not claim any share in revenue from Korukçu in return for appropriation of his brothers' shares in the village of *Gundi Abdi*. ²⁶

Going back, it appears that in 1932 (when land registration began) the Vural family registered almost all of the village land in its name.²⁷ 1,000 decares remained as state land, and 500 decares as common pasture which later was incorporated in the holdings of the landlord.²⁸ After 1952 the use of tractors meant that land could be cultivated more productively. Most importantly, the courts ended land disputes in favour of the Vural family, with the one exception given in note 27. Thus, its *de facto* ownership of the village was consolidated *de jure*.

Until the early 1950's land was cultivated in the same way as in Sinan: through tenancy arrangements giving every family in the village more or less equal access to land for a crop share of usually 10% to 12%. There was also an obligation of *corvée* labour on the landlord's domain. Another type of arrangement was undertaken by *rencbers*: (labourers or workmen), but none of these types were mutually exclusive, since all villagers were regarded as *rencbers* of the landlord. *Rencbers* cultivated parts of the landlord's farm in return for a plot of 15 decares for themselves. The landlord also provided each of them with 48 *ölcek* (21 kg) of wheat for their immediate needs and/or as seed, from the harvest of the domain land. Since labour rather than land was the bottleneck in production, the landlord was very sensitive to the numbers of villagers he controlled.

The area of land allotted to each family in the village for sharecropping was around 100 decares. Oxen were used as draught animals with 24 pairs owned by the landlord. Cultivation was concentrated on grain, using traditional technology and giving low yields. Virtually all sharecropper grain was for household consumption.

In the 1950's the village was increasingly integrated with the national market. Tractors were introduced; commoditisation accelerated; a primary school was opened and literacy rates increased. As the landlord himself put it, villagers started to experience a change in their life styles.

In 1952 the landlord bought a '44 Massey-Ferguson' with credit extended by the state (Agricultural Bank), and sold his oxen. In 1955 he acquired a second tractor together with the necessary equipment. Villagers continued to use oxen until the end of 1950's, and began to rent tractors on a regular basis only after 1960. Irrigation began in 1955 initiated by the landlord to cultivate sugar beet. Credit for irrigation was again provided by the state. Further investment in irrigation was made by the landlord in 1967 on an area of nearly 1,000 decares, and he also started to use fertilizers in 1974. He now owns three tractors, and when necessary hires additional tractors and combines from nearby villages; he also rents out his tractors to his tenants.

Through the 1950's and especially the 1960s, the amount of land rented out to sharecroppers and the number of families involved were reduced by the landlord, who began to cultivate larger areas himself. The mechanisms were similar to Sinan, with the landlord denying land to households newly established through marriage. Newly married couples had to take part of the land cultivated by the husband's father, with the result of declining size of farms. As explained below, most villagers still sharecrop some land, although insufficient for subsistence, for a share rent of one-eighth and without corvée obligations. Villagers say that a standard family needs 150 decares of dry land plus 20 decares of irrigated land for subsistence, a much larger area than any household in the village now farms.

7.2 Korukçu: Present Structure

(i) Agricultural Production

Apart from the landlord (who also rents in a further 1000 decares of state land), the sons of the man who held on to 200 decares after the 1952 land registration (note 27), and one Korukçu family with 20 decares in another village, no household owns any land. 36

households farm a total of 2,000 decares with sharecropped land 'inherited' from fathers. *Cenanlik* is practiced in Korukçu as in Sinan, particularly for the cultivation of tobacco when licensed, ²⁹ and also for watermelon.

Household agriculture is partly for subsistence (grains), and partly for sale. Tobacco (now restricted in the area), cotton (planted only by the landlord), and watermelon are produced exclusively for sale. Agricultural products are mainly sold to TMO (State Buying Agency) or to merchants, who offer slightly higher prices.

Even with the introduction of tobacco, cotton, and watermelon in the 1970's grain cultivation still constitutes the largest part of village agriculture. The landlord began to move back to grain cultivation in the late 1970's, because of labour problems with more intensive crops. Today he farms 3,500 decares of wheat, 500 decares of barley, 350 decares of cotton, and 150 decares of watermelon. He also has some 15,000 poplar trees, which villagers complain were planted on what had been common pasture.

Sharecroppers grow mostly wheat and barley with some watermelon and tobacco, on a two-year fallow system, alternating crops and pasture. Ploughing is done by tractors rented from the landlord who owns three tractor drawn ploughs, four disc-harrows, two spike tooth harrows, two grain drills, a thresher and a binder, as well as truck and a private car. Draught animals are used only for watermelon cultivation.

The landlord is the only employer of wage labour with 10 permanent workers and a large number of temporary workers. The former, hired on verbal annual contracts, include three tractor drivers, three *evdecis* (housekeepers), two shepherds and two milkers of sheep. ³⁰ Temporary labourers are hired especially for cotton cultivation: land preparation, setting up the irrigation pumps and pipes, hoeing, picking and transportation. These workers are

recruited by a *cavus* (labourer's foreman or middleman) from Bismil, as are most of the seasonal workers. Since Bismil town is only 6 km away they travel daily in trucks provided by the landlord.

(ii) Animal Husbandry

Although carried on in a primitive fashion, animal husbandry is an important means of subsistence and source of cash income in Korukçu as in Sinan. Villagers see animal husbandry and its products as a support of their economy without which it would not be viable.

The landlord owns the biggest herds in the village with 350 sheep, 240 lambs and 12 goats. Villagers have mainly sheep and goats, ranging from 15 to 100. Two villagers have cows, and two more horses for watermelon cultivation. Apiculture is practised by a few households, mostly for home consumption of honey and wax. Keeping poultry is not common either, but there are some hens and geese. Animal products are marketed by the villagers themselves in town. Being unlicensed for this, they have to accept lower prices and take the risk of prosecution by the municipal administration.

The main constraint on animal husbandry is the lack of pasture land. As in Sinan, pasture land has been incorporated by the landlord. The only land on which villagers can graze their animals is the landlord's fallow land.

(iii) Migration

There is almost no population decline in the village through permanent migration, and temporary migration is also insignificant. Only two cases of temporary labour migration were noted, being household heads who go to Mersin to work in house construction for one

month each year.

Interestingly, villagers say that they do not have enough cash to migrate. Some aspire to go to urban centres to work in the informal sector, but lack capital for even this marginal investment. No doubt decreasing urban job opportunities, especially with the crisis in the construction sector, help keep them in the village. Some villagers go to Bismil town centre to seek casual work mainly in construction.

(iv) Sources of Income and Diversification

Korukçu is similar to Sinan in its limited possibilities of diversification. There are five tractor drivers in the village, three of whom work for the landlord for the whole year. The other two try to get temporary work in Bismil and Fetele. Cotton picking creates significant demands for labour for one and a half months of the year, especially for women and children. Some village inhabitants work as cotton pickers though most are recruited from Bismil. Other supplementary occupations including fishing (one household), *cenanlık* sharecropping of watermelon (six households), herding (eight), and *kerpic kesme* or making earth building blocks (one).

(v) An Overall Evaluation of Korukçu

As discussed further in the conclusion, capitalist transformation in Korukçu has some different features than in Sinan, mainly because of the politico-ideological identity of its landlord. Although access to land has gradually been reduced by the landlord, the village remains a more viable unit than Sinan, as indicated by its demographic stability.

The relative smallness of the village and its unity as a community seem to contribute to the

viability of its social structure. The landlord belongs to this community and his family has no aspirations to accumulation and diversification outside of farming. The villagers' dissatisfaction and demands are concentrated on the state land and pasture (presently cultivated by the landlord), *not* on the landlord's domain. If anything, most villagers aspire to permanent employment on the landlord's farm, and they complain about his use of wage labour from outside. Their claim to the state land and common pasture is one of the bases of solidarity among the villagers.

8 Conclusion

The large capitalist farms in each of the two villages did not emerge through land polarization during the postwar commoditisation/mechanisation period of Turkish agriculture. Large land ownership was established long before the introduction of modern inputs. Modernisation initiated a transformation in traditional land and labour use patterns: from sharecropping to machines and wage labour, from landlordism to capitalist farming, involving a process of 'enclosure' and encroachment. Here, we discuss the degree of similarities and differences of the two villages within the same overall path of transformation.

To start with, there are significant differences between the two villages in terms of population and total cultivatable area, with implications for potential accumulation by their landlords. Sinan has twice as much land as Korukçu with three times the population. Since virtually all land is owned by landlord families, the social identities and ideologies of the landlords, and their relations with villagers, have an effect, at least at the micro-level of the villages.

Part of this effect reflects relations, especially those of co-operation, within the landlord family of Korukçu. One brother has been village herdsman since 1958, resident in the

village and closely involved with its members. For major decisions about links with the outside world, including exchange relations, another brother (the oldest) is responsible. Daily routine on their farm is co-ordinated and supervised by the youngest brother. The brothers have never delegated management of their farm to an overseer.

Although they almost always expressed the contrary, one feels that there is a general acceptance, and some sense of stability, among villagers in Korukçu, whose social relations with a resident landlord family are more 'traditional' in type, despite the economic changes of recent decades. In Sinan the picture is totally different. An overt, almost formal, state of hostility prevails between villagers and a landlord who is a 'semi-absentee', usually visiting the village only at harvest period. There is a physical and social distance between him and the villagers that is virtually absolute, and which has some historical roots prior to its much sharper manifestation in the present generation. The present landlord is young, educated in England, unquestionably secular, and a voracious accumulator. Especially since the murder of a villager by the landlord's cousin, there is an unbridgeable gap between him and the villagers.

None of the brothers in the landlord family in Korukçu were educated beyond secondary school. They look like and behave as villagers, albeit of superior position, sharing the same social setting, culture and religious beliefs. Religion in particular provides an ideological affinity. The form of address of the landlord in Korukçu as *aga*, resonates traditional authority and religious quality, whereas the landlord of Sinan is called *bey*, with its connotations of education, urban identity, and social distance.

Differences in the migration patterns of the two villages also have significant effects for social relations and consciousness. The people of Sinan have much more experience and knowledge of the world outside the village and indeed seek their fortunes and security outside rather than inside. Money from earnings is invested in towns and town life,

whereas Korukçu villagers put any savings into livestock, having larger herds and giving them more attention than Sinan people who often sell animals as an effect of their insecurity.

What is common to the people of both villages is the hope of gaining land through a distribution of state land and reclamation of the commons appropriated by the landlords. This is one reason why people cling on to life in or near Sinan (those expelled), and maintain their connections with the village. The realisation of such hopes depends, of course, on the outcomes of political processes in the wider arena.

Notes

- 1 For the dynamics and mechanisms of this change, see, SBF: 1954, Aktan: 1957, Karpat: 1960, Kanbolat: 1963, Hinderink and Kiray: 1970, Teheli: 1978.
- 2 Tarim Bakanligi: 1968, p.27, Statistics show that between the years 1956 and 1962 the number of tractors stabilized around 44,000. There was a further rapid increase in the second half of the 1960's when the number of tractors reached 100,000 (Demir: 1973, p.18), with 243,000 in 1975 (SIS: 1975); 458,714 in 1981 (SIS: 1984, p.5); 583,974 according to the latest statistics (SIS: 1986, p.118).
- 3 There was a further marked increase in the rate of fertilizer consumption, especially in the 1960's with 1,025,756 tons in 1966 (Tarim Bakanligi: 1968, p.25).
- 4 See Tuna: 1970, p.16, also Tarim Bakanligi: 1968, p.25.
- 5 Tarim Bakanligi: 1968, p.21.
- 6 By that time, the limits of cultivable land were almost reached. There was a slower increase in the amount of land cultivated from 1956 onwards, by 1981 amounting to 28.5 million hectares. (Tarim Bakanligi: 1968, p.21; SIS: 1984, p.3).
- 7 SIS: *Statistical Yearbook(s) of Turkey*, for the relevant years.
- 8 The size of holdings is also affected by inequalities in inter-village land distribution. Keyder argues that "inter-village land distribution is much more uneven than intra-village distributions". (Keyder: 1983/b, p.48).
- 9 These points may also be related to discussions of the "dominant trend in Turkish agriculture" in which either the fragmentation or the concentration of land is claimed by various authors as the dominant trend alongside with the discussion of relations of production in Turkish agriculture. A review of such debates on the "agrarian question" in Turkey and the political inspiration of the two positions is given by Seddon and Margulies (1982).
- 10 See Avcioğlu: 1968, p.403. For the replacement of sharecroppers by tractors, see Karpat: 1960, pp.92-93.

- 11 For a comprehensive explanation of *miri* land, see Barkan: 1938, and for the history of land tenure system in the Empire, see Keyder and Islamoglu: 1977.
- 12 For detailed information on the *timar* system, see Akdag: 1971, pp.251-260.
- 13 For the reasons of this decline, see for example, Keyder: 1976 and 1977; Lewis: 1968, pp. 21-40.
- 14 For a detailed description of the nature and the extent of tax farming in the Ottoman Empire, see, Genç: 1975; and for the effects of this system, Inalcik: 1964, pp. 47-48. For the origin of and the change in *iltizam* system, see Keyder: 1977, p.50. For the dissolution of the *timar* system, see also, Akdag: 1945, pp. 419-431.
- 15 *Ösr* was a traditional Islamic tax equal to one-tenth of the annual product. For a description of Ottoman taxes, see Inalcik: 1959, pp. 575-610.
- 16 Keyder writes that "if the central authority remained powerful, would-be landlords would be stymied in their efforts to subjugate the peasantry, and the tax collection mechanism of the central authority could survive unrivalled. This equation however was frequently disturbed as various external forces mobilized the internal potential toward the rise of landlord regimes. This secular tendency culminated towards the end of the eighteenth century in the virtual partitioning of Western Anatolia by *ayans*". See Keyder: 1987, p.13.
- 17 Cited in Tutengil: 1955, p.18. See for example, Yasa: 1970, pp. 71-76; Besikci: 1969, pp. 65-67; and Tutengil: 1975, pp. 135-139.
- 18 Amongst the *agas* there are those who have obtained the control of their large estates legally as well as those who have obtained it by force or by other extra-economic means, before and after the foundation of the Republic in 1923. For case histories of such *agas*, see Yalmak: 1971.
- 19 All the information on various forms of sharecropping is from Aras: 1956, pp. 64-67, unless otherwise stated.
- 20 Fieldwork was carried out in 1981, and the use of the present tense in the text refers to

- this year. For a more detailed account of the two villages, see Akcay 1985, pp. 70-177.
- 21 The landlord of Sinan, after transforming himself into a capitalist farmer, began to diversify on the basis of his accumulation from agriculture. In addition to construction, he also owns a shipyard in Balıkesir. His business activities stretch from Yalova to İzmir, from Diyarbakır to Ankara where he is also involved in highway building and real estate speculation.
 - 22 Apart from the landlord, the headman is the only villager who owns a tractor which he bought in 1969. The office of headman is almost hereditary, with the political consent of the landlord, and has passed from father to son in the same family for several generations. The present headman has always been on good terms with the landlord, and was allowed a large amount of land to sharecrop that enabled him to accumulate enough to buy a tractor.
 - 23 He added that the landlord "for the time being, can't try to expel anybody due to the positive effects of the 12th September (the 1980 military coup). Furthermore, if he succeeded, he'd have to pay house expenses, bricks, etc."
 - 24 This continues the arrangement between the present headman's father and the landlord family, again illustrating the importance of land allocation as a political mechanism.
 - 25 Most village men during the early years of the Republic (1923 on), were deserters from compulsory military service. Since Hasan *Aga* was in good terms with state officials, he threatened deserters and their families with reporting them to officials if they stood in his way.
 - 26 The older brother, S. Vural (born 1925), lives in Bismil. He organizes marketing from his office in town, and also makes the important decisions about production. The second brother, M. Vural (born 1927) has been headman of Korukçu since 1958. He also lives in Bismil and has his farm in Gundi Abdi. The youngest brother, A. Vural, runs the farm in Korukçu, and spends most of his time in the village, although his wife and children live in Bismil.
 - 27 The Land Commission of 1932 gave land to five other villagers, but in a second

registration (1952), four of them lost their land. This is explained by villagers in the following way: in 1932, Necip Vural distributed nearly 1,000 decares of less fertile land to five villagers, since he had difficulties with high rates of taxation. By 1952 this land had increased in value because of modern inputs and he was able to reappropriate most of it. However, he failed to get back 200 decares from the Kahraman family, four brothers of which cultivate this area today as the only other landowners in the village.

28 As in Sinan, the major political reference point and demands by peasants centre on the allocation of state land, and the reclamation of common land from the landlord.

29 In Turkey, certain crops such as opium, tobacco and sugar beat can be cultivated only with official consent.

30 The landlord said that six of the permanent workers are from the village; the villagers claimed that he does not hire labour from the village - but see below.

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