

peasant-worker into the Israeli economy, and the systematic control over the movement of workers through the modes of their recruitment, as well as the (voluntary) preservation of the marginalized family farm to sustain the low wages paid to the peasant-workers - all can be illuminated meaningfully within Wolpe's schema outlined above (discussion in Chapter 7; case study in Chapter 8, below).²

'De-peasantisation', Differentiation and Mobility

I have borrowed the term 'de-peasantization', but not the totality of the concept, from Lenin's The Development of Capitalism in Russia (1977; originally, 1899). The reference is made there to the 'utter dissolution of the old, patriarchal peasantry and the creation of a new type of rural inhabitants' (1977:176). The penetration of capitalist relations in agriculture was optimistically (?) seen by Lenin at the turn of the century as generating a radical process of differentiation in which 'a commodity economy and capitalist production' prevail. The increased exploitation of peasants, through the medium of merchant's capital, was expected to lead not only to the differentiation of peasants into different strata of rural petty bourgeoisie, kulaks and agricultural wage workers (a rural proletariat) - but also to the actual dissolution of the peasantry as a class (ibid.:175, 177).

'De-peasantization' thus conceived by Lenin was an essential component of the process of polarization whose 'objective' function was the enlargement of the home market, and whose 'subjective' dimension was to lay the groundwork for the intensification of the class struggle in the (Russian) countryside. This unilinear progressive theory of agrarian development ultimately created controversies not only in its capacity as a universal model for underdeveloped countries, but also as to its applicability to the interpretation of the empirical evidence in Russia itself. The controversy involved writers with diverse political