

resulted in its expropriation and their eventual eviction from the village (Scholch, 1982:25).

In most cases, including the Marj sold to the Sursuks and the Maritime Plain lands sold to the Rothschilds, land was sold complete with its inhabitants; and in the case of Beisan, appropriated by the Sultan himself, peasants were kept on the land. The process of land expropriation in this period did not result in a simultaneous expropriation of the peasants. Nonetheless, it did prepare the ground for their eventual expropriation.

It has been suggested that the Ottoman state intentionally avoided the creation of a class of landless peasants in order to prevent further internal unrest. Within the context of Palestine, some authors stress the potential threat that was posed to the Arab national movement by the increasing number of Russian Jewish settlers (Antonius, 1969). Some authors also argue that the peasants resistance to new forms of production which were not compatible with their pre-capitalist forms was another major reason for the absence of proletarianization and the lack of capitalist development in agriculture prior to British rule (Gozansky, 1986; Saed, 1985). In an attempt to prove this point, Gozansky goes to great lengths detailing the different forms of production relations adopted by the Rothschilds in their agricultural enterprise. Her conclusion is that only when share-cropping was adopted were the Rothschilds able to succeed in their enterprise (Gozansky, 1986:45-46).

While expropriation of peasants on a large-scale was not a practice during late Ottoman rule, it was not altogether absent. The sale of Abu-Shusha village, for example, did result in the immediate