

expropriation of the 51 peasant families living on and cultivating the land (Scholch, 1982:22).

Commenting on the heavy resistance put up by Abu-Shusha villagers, one author observed:

The hatred of the Germans engendered among the Arabs, which found violent expression ... mainly in the form of attacks on German transport, nearly reached the boiling point again during 1909 crisis. In Wilhelma [built on Abu-Shusha land] direct clashes took place...The uprooting of trees ..and the grazing of cattle in the nearby village of Rantiya ..on cultivated land was accompanied by the explicit threat that the villagers would harrass the Germans until they were forced to leave. The tension reached its height with the armed assault of neighbouring Arabs on the German settlement..A year later the German settler Fritz Unger was murdered..by villagers from Tira. (Carmel,1975:451)

One member of the Bergheim's family, according to the same source was also killed.

The case of Abu-Shusha suggests that the issue of peasant expropriation became more problematic when foreign settlers were involved in agricultural colonization. For example, the Templars who settled the land bought by the Bergheims provided a non-indigenous source of labour power to the new landlords. Yet, this by no means should be taken to imply that in the absence of settlers, indigenous cultivators were saved from expropriation.

The privatization of the Marj and the Maritime Plain, it will be shown, initiated the process which eventually led to the expropriation of the peasants on these lands. The problem of peasant expropriation, must not be treated in isolation from the context of the general socio-economic changes which developed in the late 19th century. The fact that the overwhelming majority of the Palestinian peasants were still tied to the land does not mean that peasants resisted new forms