

have had a mitigating impact on any loss of access to land by the peasants.

So, in spite of the different forms of land management and the appropriation of the agricultural surplus over the span of about four centuries, peasants maintained their customary rights to land even after the Land Code of 1858 for more than two decades. However, what the Land Code did was set the stage and establish the legal basis for the later commoditization of land and expropriation of peasant land by European Jewish settlers and Arab big landowners, a process that had its limited beginnings in the last decades of Ottoman rule but intensified during the Mandate period. There were other laws subsequent to the Land Code of 1858 that reinforced it, but one that made possible the European acquisition of land was the law of 1867 that allowed foreigners to own land.

2.2 Demography

Three salient features characterize the demographic development of Palestine between the mid-nineteenth century and 1918, the onset of the British occupation. One, the population doubled. Two, there was a substantial increase in the absolute and relative urban population. Three, it was about 1880 that many European Jewish immigrants started settling in Palestine. This and later waves of European Jewish immigration added a new twist to the demographic development of Palestine. For now, explanations of the increase of population size cannot be simply sought in the primarily internal socioeconomic factors. It is for this reason that an understanding of the demographic development of Palestine has to look