

involved basic food processing and building construction. Methods and techniques of production remained basically the same, with minor exceptions.

Nature, and most specifically the variations in annual rainfall, had a major impact on the quantity and quality of agricultural yields. In spite of the growth in intensive agriculture as in citrus and other cash crops, the paucity of surface water, and the lack of technology for deep-water extraction (reflecting a peasantry with limited resources and a lack of government help), dry farming remained the primary method for the production of staple crops.

The incorporation of Palestine in the world capitalist market was not preceded, accompanied, nor resulted from changes in the social relations of production. In spite of the emergence of large-landed estates (preceding European Jewish settlement), peasant access to land—their primary means of production—was maintained. It is with the influx of Jewish European settlers and their acquisition of land that the peasants' hereditary and communal access to land began to be threatened. The commoditization of land was the first and most important impact of European settlement. It also signaled the beginning of the disintegration of the traditional and communal relationship of peasant to land.

The acquisition of land by European Jewish settlers meant that, at a time of substantial Arab population growth in predominantly agricultural Palestine, land was being withdrawn from Arab agricultural use, thus increasing the pressure on land.