

Finally, it is crucial to point out that most of the writers discussed in the literature review confine their analysis to the impact of population growth and inheritance patterns as the sole or primary factors in explaining the reduction of the average size and increasingly unequal ownership distribution of holdings. This will be elaborated on in Chapter 6, but suffice it to say here that, while obviously important, this quantitative aspect ignores the more important issue. It is, again, the nature of the colonial power and its policies, and the settler movement, with all its characteristics (including its acquisition of land), both interacting with and impacting the structure and internal changes in rural areas, that unleashed a process that was qualitatively different from the Ottoman period, and which led to the dispossession of large numbers of peasants.