

dispossession, the majority of peasants still owned land by the end of the Mandate.

Land dispossession, in the context of a lack of meaningful alternatives of income, meant the pauperization of the majority of peasants. The exception to this situation was during WWII when the government demand for labor, as part of its war efforts, was substantial and thus employed a large number of people. As the war ended, that source of income started to dissipate, and many of the laid off were now in no-man's land. The availability of wage labor was on the decline, while at the same time, those peasants could not be "absorbed" back into agriculture.

The dispossession of the Palestinian peasantry took place in three ways. Two of those ways may be characterized as outright dispossession. First, there were those who were evicted from the land they cultivated when it was acquired by European settlers from large landholders. Those peasants may have been owners of the land, but the titles to it were registered in someone else's name, as explained in Chapter 2. Those peasants may alternatively have been tenants on the land for many generations. In both cases, peasants cultivated the land and were dispossessed.

The second outright and complete dispossession was the result of the 1948 war and involved the land of those who were expelled by force or under the threat of force. Obviously, this included all Arab owners of land, not just small peasants. This type of expropriation of land of Palestinian Arabs continues to the present in the case of those who remained within the boundaries of the Israeli state and hold