

Peasant proletarianization in Palestine was not, according to Carmi and Rosenfeld, a phenomenon emerging from landlessness ("it was often the man with land who was the first to seek outside employment"), but one that was determined by the demands for wage labour outside the agrarian system. These demands corresponded to the cyclical booms and recessions in the market (1924-27 Arab and Jewish urban construction boom; 1926-27 citrus plantations; 1933-36 road construction, railroad etc.; 1940-1948 army installations and public works).

Similarly, tenancy and sharecropping are treated not as signs of incipient proletarianization - but as a process of cyclical movement of the lower peasantry in and out of ownership status without it leading to alienation from land since the categories of petty ownership and tenancy were exchangeable.

(While the authors are correct in our view in disregarding land alienation as a factor in proletarianization, they are mistaken, (as we suggested in chapter 5, above), in their assessment of sharetenancy. For lack of proletarianization at the village level need not mean lack of differentiation; and minor differentiation, given chances for rural investment, can, and did lead to significant changes in the peasant's status).

Peasant proletarianization thus remained a protracted process. Since urban sources of employment were contingent on the public (colonial) sector and not on indigenous economic growth the statuses of peasant and worker became interchangeable (478). Since the farmer had a holding ("a pipeline to the village storehouse") he was able to receive below subsistence wages and was so treated by his employer, thus depressing the wages of the urban proletariat with no access to land.