

tion of share-tenants as a subordinate category among peasant classes. Finally, there is an implicit element of technological determinism in Griffin's assessment which, barring a social revolution in the countryside, tends to reduce the various forms of agricultural technology (HYVs, mechanization, irrigation technology, etc.) to instruments of subjugation for the poor peasantry.

We shall argue in this chapter that this need not be the case. The appropriation of the agricultural surplus value by the "landed classes" in the Jordan Valley is only secondarily a function of their control of agricultural technology; it has much more to do with control of markets and sources of credit. Nor, as we shall see for Zbeidat, do they have a monopoly over the use of technology; for when landlords do have "preferential access" to technology it need not, given the currently prevailing conditions of tenancy, necessarily enhance their domination over their tenants.

The Revolution in Irrigation Technology

The mid-seventies were crucial years for farming in Ghor el Far'a, comparable in their significance to the drilling of artesian wells in the early 1960's. The negligence of farming by peasant households there was rooted not in the pull of higher wages outside the village, as was the case in the highlands, but in the increased salinity of the soil which was widespread throughout the central and northern Valley. In Zbeidat there was a noticeable decline in productivity in plots still under the farmers' control. The movement towards work in neighbouring Jewish settlements was merely a response to this ecological factor.

Israeli settlements in the Valley had overcome salinity by the combined use of sprinkler and drip irrigation. It was not the lack of familiarity with these techniques that prevented their adoption, but the lack