

this study, a selective use has been made of defining the peasants' relationship to the wider social formation. This 'conceptual eclecticism', as it may appear to the reader, results from my perception of agrarian devolution in a segmented society exhibiting two distinct developmental trends; in one the exigencies of the external labour market and the internal ecological conditions of dry farming play the decisive force; in the other, it is the injection of merchant capital into the new agricultural technology and capital intensive farming to mediate between absentee landlords and refugee peasants that is seen as primary. The common link integrating these two agrarian forms is the colonial Israeli state and its regulated control over agricultural commodities, but laissez faire attitude to the (Arab) labour market.

Since in none of the agrarian forms identified do we observe the actual domination of capitalist relations in agriculture, the use of uni-linear (or bilinear) models of differentiation has not been appropriate for this study. I have utilized Wolpe's model of internal colonialism to define the relationship between commuting peasant-workers and the demands of the Israeli economy for cheap labour. Despite considerable problems with this paradigm (such as the much criticized 'conservation-dissolution' component), it continues to provide a succinct heuristic device to understand the nature of a colonial relationship as much attracted by subjugated labour as it is repelled by the demographic consequences of integrating that labour.

Similarly, Keydar's typology of transitional forms suffers from extrapolating trends that are either incipient in the peasant economy, or lack an adequate basis for empirical generalization. Still, the taxonomy has been of utility because it focuses on village-wide changes as units of analysis, and locates the 'transitions' in a historical and ecological terrain that is comparable to the conditions of Palestinian