

But this trend has reached its upper limits, in my estimation, since in the prevailing state of agricultural technology in the region, only the switch to more capital intensive technology (such as hothouses) can enhance crop yields beyond their current levels. Such a development would, in all probability, be unlikely and unwelcome. Unlikely because the capital costs required for increased intensification are beyond the existing and potential wealth of the vast majority of Valley farmers, including the wealthy ones. Unwelcome because it is labour displacing, and in the event that it is introduced by absentee landlords, it will invariably create conditions of dislocation that most peasant communities in the Valley will be unable to sustain.

Finally, the emerging patterns of intensive farming created in the Valley has further integrated the refugee peasants into the Jordanian, Israeli, and international marketing networks. Price fluctuations in input costs, and wholesale prices of crops, have compounded the farmers' traditional concern for weather conditions. This situation has created a new dependency among Valley peasants on a whole constellation of forces associated with the new agricultural technology: seedling nurseries, hormone treatments, hybrid seeds, maintenance engineers, long-lasting drip pipes, etc. In a paradoxical way, the new cobweb of intensive farming and its linkages with the urban sources of finance, has replaced the earlier subjugation of the farmers on commission agents.

It would be a mistake, however, to conceptually treat these linkages at the same level. Dependence on, and control by, landlords and commission agents have been associated with the backward conditions of semi-feudal relations in Palestinian agriculture. These relations are likely to survive the introduction of the new technology, but only selectively, with some landlords moving in the direction of capitalist farming and others dropping out - as rentiers or into other forms of