

Faced with the cruelty of Zionist colonization policy, the Palestinian peasantry was made into a "revolutionary" class: however, under the most vulnerable conditions and in the absence of a leadership. Under the Labor-Zionist practices, the Palestinian peasantry and proletariat had every reason for alliance. Peasants and proletariat were the vanguards of the Ezzidin el-Qassam movement; of the August, 1929 insurrection; and the 1936-1939 revolt.⁵⁵

In the Yishuv phase, the conquest of land was implemented through "gentle" market exchange (although for the Palestinian peasant this was a violent dispossession). For the objectives of the Zionist movement, this, however, was a slow and unsatisfactory process. By 1947, the total Jewish holdings comprised only about 9-12 percent of arable land.⁵⁶

The transfer of Palestinians across the boundaries of their social formation in the aftermath of the 1948 War meant that extensive plots of land were automatically transferred into the control of the Jewish State. As 250 Arab villages were destroyed upon the expulsion of their inhabitants, much urban land was also acquired from Arab owners who were expelled or fled from the larger towns. Extensive land acquisition operations took place then, using the army of the newly-born State to drive Arabs over the Armistice lines. Kibbutzim and other agricultural colonies then played a crucial role in acquiring land from remaining Arab villages within the 1948 lines by surrounding them with barbed wire fences and taking final and absolute possession of any obtainable land.⁵⁷

The 1948 War represented a transition from the Yishuv to the nation-building phase. This transitional period was the most critical time in terms of large-scale acquisition of land. According to Chomsky, by the