

capitalist centre.

While it is true that throughout this period crops were primarily produced for their use value and the overwhelming majority of cultivators produced for their personal consumption, production for the market was also developing.

Palestinian peasants, it has been observed, were quick to respond to international market demands. The peasant knew how to adjust his production to these demands. In a short span of time, some observed, the same plot of land would experience a radical shift in the type of export crop it produced (Scholch, 1982:14). While natural reasons, such as crop failure or shortage of rain could partially be responsible for this phenomenon, changes in market demands were, in fact, a greater stimulus.

The changing conditions of cotton production in Palestine illuminate this point further. In the wake of the American civil war and Britain's increased demands for cotton, more stimulus was given to the regions of Nablus and Acre for the production of cotton. As Table 1 demonstrates, (see following page) large quantities of cotton were exported from Acre and Haifa in the early 1850s. This was followed by a period marked by a sharp decline from 1854 until 1859. Export of cotton was on the rise again by the early 1860s.

Commenting on the further movement in cotton production and export in the 1860s and 1870s Scholch noted the following:

In 1863 and 1864 cotton regained its position as an important export commodity..However, this boom was short-lived..European demand subsided in the second part of the 1860s, while from 1865 to 1872 one bad harvest followed another in northern Palestine...Only in 1869 was a considerable quantity of cotton exported once again.  
(Scholch, 1982: 14)