

be repaid by the fallah should prices fall below a certain figure. (53)

The fallaheen who were desperate to dispose of their wheat at any price were left with two options both of which amounted to ruination. Firstly, the fallah could consume more wheat which he and his family badly needed, but this would be disasterous for him since he would have less wheat to exchange for money to meet his payments which were due before next harvest. And secondly, he could retain his wheat to meet such of his payments as were due in wheat, rather than cash, and would find that, since wheat had no market at all, the creditors refused to accept payment in this form. (54)

Competition and the exclusion of indigenous Palestinian products from the developing Jewish market had great effects on the class structure of rural Palestine. The real effect of the development of citrus and oil industries on capitalist lines was not so much in widening the contradictions within Palestine's rural classes. Although, as pointed out in this chapter, some Palestinian landowners-merchants have benefited in the process, the majority of the fallaheen have not. As a result of this development, the gap between the different strata within the rural poor, defined as Fallaheen Muu'dameen, Fallaheen Shibh Muu'dameen and Fallaheen Mullak (middle peasants) was in fact narrowed. By pushing out of business small rural industries, competition drove an increasing section of the class of Shibh Muu'dameen and Fallaheen Mullak down to the ranks of landless proletariat.

Moreover, with the elimination of the class of big absentee landlords-mainly after the appropriation of their land by various Zionist bodies- the indigenous Palestinian class structure became