

largely composed of two main forces: masses of peasants actually and potentially proletarianized; and the class of local and absentee Palestinian landlords.

Nevertheless, the class of indigenous rural bourgeoisie, the Heads of Hamulas, had also undergone significant changes. The social and political power this class had previously enjoyed was severely curtailed during British colonialism.

The leadership status this class traditionally held was not only due to its economic power, i.e., its ownership of the village land. The whole structure of Palestine's pre-capitalist economy in late 19th and early 20th century was in fact built around the village/Hamula economy.

With the development of a market economy and the expropriation and proletarianization of the fallaheen, the land and the village cultivators were no longer within the sphere of control and influence of this class. The peasants who were forced out of their land, and consequently out of their village, became the subjects of new economic forces and gradually distanced themselves from the dominant role of the traditional leadership enjoyed by the Heads of Hamulas.

Finally, while the stunting effects of colonial capitalism on the development of the rural Palestinian economy have begun to reshape the latter's classes, a new structural reality has emerged simultaneously. A strong European (Jewish) capitalist economy with some peculiar characteristics, next chapter will show, began to gradually but intensively predominate over Palestine's rural traditional economy. However, the mechanisms used in reproducing the capitalist predominant mode of production, as this chapter has in part