

beyond their needs and were the other strata of the peasantry. However, the question is not that there was surplus or not, but the uses to which it was put. Although it was true that much of the surplus was invested in urban construction, trade, and money lending, there was also a substantial increase in citrus plantations and, to a lesser degree, the expansion in other cash crops such as bananas, vegetables, and others. This involved intensive cultivation and an increase in agricultural wage labor whether on a permanent or seasonal basis.

Carmi and Rosenfeld exclude the growth in citrus plantations and vegetables from their analysis because, according to them, most of the investment was by merchants and moneylenders “and not villagers.” What Carmi and Rosenfeld did was to confuse analytically abstract concepts with their concrete manifestations. Although one may deal with moneylenders, merchants, and landlords as analytically distinct because of their different position/function in the economy, in Palestine (as is the case in most, if not all agricultural economies), they were one and the same in many cases. The landlords, by virtue of their position as surplus appropriators, were uniquely qualified in the context of the rural areas to assume the role of moneylenders and merchants.<sup>38</sup>

Big landowners were part and parcel of the village economy by virtue of their position and function. It was of no consequence that many of them resided in towns. Many of them left family members behind to oversee their land. Others

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<sup>38</sup>Sarah Graham-Brown, “The Political Economy,” in *Studies*, ed. Owen, 101-2.