

## 7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate and analyze the nature and extent of rural change in Palestine. We inquired into the changes in taxation, debt, land tenure, the techniques of production, and agricultural production. A unifying theme and emphasis were on the more fundamental changes in the social relations of production in the rural areas as derived from the former changes, and, in turn, driving them. This was done in the context of the interaction among colonial government policy, European settler capitalism, and the structure and internal dynamics of the rural areas, and, in addition, by the further integration of the country into the world capitalist market.

The main finding of the study was that there was a fast and substantial process of differentiation in the rural areas during the Mandate. This differentiation was reflected in increases in the concentration of holdings in Arab ownership, the continued acquisition of land by European settlers, landlessness, and wage labor in agriculture and public works. At the same time, the process of differentiation was accompanied with only limited capitalist development in the Arab rural areas. However, what stands out was the extent of the dispossession of peasants from this process. It involved the majority of peasants. Land dispossession was total for some peasants and partial for others, but in the latter case, most peasants were left with a piece of land insufficient for subsistence in varying degrees. In spite of this