

Abstract

Peasants and Bureaucracy in the Jordan Valley

This research aims to examine the relationship between peasants in the Jordan Valley and the state bureaucracy notably the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA).

Field work was conducted in the middle Ghor area on a part time basis from June 1988 to June 1989. The thesis discusses the different state institutions in the Jordan Valley and the changes in the peasant way of life. It also examines communication patterns between the peasants themselves and between the peasants and the employees of the JVA. Finally clientalism relations and their role in solving peasant problems with the JVA is discussed.

The thesis consists of six chapters. The introduction reviews the literature relevant to the Jordan valley case and describes the area of the case study, the problem of the study and the methodology followed. The historical background of development projects, the conditions behind the establishment of the JVA and other state institutions such as The Farmers Union, Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Credit foundation is also discussed. This is followed by a description of the circumstances preceding the development projects in the Jordan Valley, and the changes that occurred in the peasants daily life. These changes include the beginning of the production for the world market and a change from family farms to wage labor.

The discussion also deals with the attitudes of the farmers to the JVA and the attitudes of the JVA employees to farmers as well as analysis of the flow of information between them. The diffusion of different kinds of information among farmers and among JVA employees is discussed through a network analysis. The problems that farmers face with the JVA and the means of solving different kinds of problems is discussed by analysing the informal structure. The thesis includes a number of case-studies to illustrate the main points.