

he adds:

"hence, the demands to have his share in all the categories of land and in all the sections of the village, so that his parcels should include both fertile land and poor land, land on which winter crops are grown and land good for summer crops." (1952: 205-206).

The fragmentation and scattering of the lineage and the fallah's holdings were also increased due to the nature of Muslim laws of inheritance whereby the landed property was divided among all the deceased's sons and daughters. However the latter were traditionally discouraged from asking for their shares.

"When the division comes, the heirs, are not anxious to receive their portion in one piece. On the contrary, they seek to obtain a holding equal in every respect to those of their fellow-heirs, and insist on being assigned portions in all the categories of land contained in the inheritance. This straining after equality inevitably leads to the further division of each separate parcel within the total inheritance. The result of all this is more and more fragmentation of the holdings". (Ibid: 205-206).

Marriages and family disputes also resulted in more fragmentation in landed property. In cases of inter-village marriages, or cross-clan marriages, the son often demanded his share of land which up until then has been worked jointly with his father. In such cases also the inheritance of the two villages or two lineages mingle together. Transfer of shares of property to others through selling or through exchange of land parcels was a common act and contributed to the mingling of parcels. The expelling of a number of clans from Deir Ghassaneh as a result of clan disputes resulted in forcing the expelled to sell their shares to those who remained in Deir Ghassaneh. In addition, al-muzara'a, the acquisition of land by landless peasants from a big landlord through a process of reclaiming uncultivated land, usually involved the arboring of poor land over a number of years, after which a portion of the land and the trees - usually one-half - was granted to the peasant cultivator. Through