

In economics, the decision-making models refer to “farm economics in the neoclassical mold which are concerned with the allocation of resources on the farm and with the farmers’ responses to markets and to innovations.”¹²² Social and political factors, crucial for understanding rural areas, are held constant. These models stress the importance of the individuals who “are seen as making choices about their values and their actions.”¹²³ Although these models may be useful in “explaining the success or failure of the individual within the system, the system itself is left out of the analysis.”¹²⁴ Although Metzger discusses the role of institutions in the economy (Zionist public institutions), his overall approach falls within the decision-making models. I discussed Metzger’s explanation for why a peasant sells his land or chooses to work for wages in urban areas as being “free choices” and “preference” among alternatives for the purpose of “improving his economic lot.”

Second is the systems approach, “which emphasize[s] environmental, technological, and demographic factors and which seek[s] to explain their interrelationships within farming systems.”¹²⁵ Many of the studies using this approach make use of Boserup’s work “which presents the bold thesis that increasing population density explains the development of increasingly intensive

¹²²Ibid., 21.

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Ibid.

¹²⁵Ibid., 18.