

feddan; and, finally, 6,940 earner/families or 29 percent were classified as laborers.

The last percentage, 29 percent, has been interpreted and generalized by Simpson to mean that it represents the percentage of landless villagers for the whole country.⁸⁹ This interpretation has been strongly attacked by Stein as “dubious extrapolation.”⁹⁰ It is worthwhile to present Stein’s critique and test its validity as it obviously bears on our discussion of differentiation in Chapter 6. In Stein’s words:

He [Simpson] deduced that 29.4 percent of these family heads were doubtless *all* landless men who *previously* had been cultivators. . . . The Johnson-Crosbie Report never equated the laboring class with a landless condition. Nor did the report say that 29.4 percent of the population in the 104 representative villages or among the 86,980 rural Arab families was landless. Hope-Simpson conveniently chose figures to fit his philosophy. Clearly, he wanted to ascribe to Jewish land purchase and settlement the responsibility for the creation of a landless rural Arab class. He mistakenly or deliberately assumed that it was not customary practice in Palestine to have laborers work without owning land. Farm servants, field laborers, crop watchers, manure carriers, ploughmen, threshers, herdsmen, and shepherds *sometimes* worked on land without possessing either formal title to it or formal written tenancy agreements with a landlord [emphasis mine].⁹¹

There are several problems with Stein’s statement. First, Stein misrepresents Hope-Simpson: The latter never said that these men had previously all been cultivators. Simpson explicitly states, “It is not known how many of these

⁸⁹Hope-Simpson Report, 142.

⁹⁰Kenneth W. Stein, *The Land in Question in Palestine, 1917-1939* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 109.

⁹¹*Ibid.*