

survey also found that the holdings were highly fragmented as shown in Table 3.9. Table 3.9 shows that the number of fragments per holding increases as the size of the holding increases. The average number of fragments per holding was nine.

It has been pointed out that fragmentation prevents the development of intensive agriculture,¹⁰⁴ especially irrigation and the use of machinery, unless some cooperative scheme is designed. It has also been found that co-ownership was a salient feature of Palestinian Arab holdings, and that the number of co-owners increased as the size of the holdings increased.¹⁰⁵ Warriner points out that “Co-ownership is a way of avoiding further subdivision of holdings,”¹⁰⁶ and, as the population increased, it reflected the shortage of land and inheritance laws.

With the population increase and the European Jewish acquisition of land, the size of the average Arab holding, of course, decreased. On this aspect, the Hope-Simpson report states:

There is . . . a progressive diminution in the area of the holdings; in every village visited there were complaints on this score. Portions of the holdings have been sold either to pay off debts or to pay the Government taxes or to obtain the wherewithal to keep the family alive. The population of the villages is increasing faster than in Turkish times, owing in large measure to the cessation of conscription. There is consequently increasing competition for land and division of holdings among the increased number of members of the family.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴Warriner, *Land and Poverty*, 64; *Survey I*, 278.

¹⁰⁵*Survey I*, 276-7.

¹⁰⁶Warriner, *Land and Poverty*, 64.

¹⁰⁷Hope-Simpson Report, 69.