incidence of sharing in capital investment by the farmer than in the Eastern or Southern Valley regions. The division of net marketed yield on the basis of 50:50 between peasant and landlord seems to be the prevailing ratio in the Western Valley. In the northern West Bank (the Jenin-Tulkarem region), the peasant sharecropper receives only one-third of the net yield for irrigated plots (Tamari and Giacaman, 1980:11).

The higher rate of return for sharecroppers in the valley as opposed to those in the northern plains can be related to several factors: (1) the traditionally settled and stable agricultural communities in Jenin and Tulkarem, with an equally higher number of owner-operated farms, has worked to the disadvantage of sharetenants, who had to compete over scarcer land resources; (2) the harsh climatic conditions in the valley compelled absentee landlords to offer better conditions in order to attract a settled agricultural workforce; (3) the historical presence of tribal landlords (such as the Masa'eed) in the Jordan Valley, and their patronage of refugee tenants since the early 1950s, seems to have set the pace for subsequent contracts between the new (urban-based) landowners and their tenants in the valley (Tamari and Giacaman, 1980:11-13).

Thus, rural class relations in the Jordan Valley cannot be reduced to a formula of "demographic pressures" as suggested by 'Ashour above: i.e. the more pressing the ratio of potential tenants on scarce land resources, the more unfavourable tenancy contracts are obtained. The exceptionally high ratio of landless refugees to settled peasants in the Jordan Valley has worked in such a way as to create significant differentiation within the landless rural community, more favourable terms for share-tenants, and lower wages for agricultural workers with no access to leasehoods. In this context, previous agricultural skills and personal bonds to absentee landlords and their agents (<u>wukala'</u>) (usually enhanced by proximity of living