

### PART III

#### VILLAGE CASE STUDIES

In this part of the thesis (Chapters 8 to 12), I will discuss the concrete manifestations of elements of the agrarian transition discussed above in village studies conducted in the central highlands and the Jordan Valley in the mid-seventies and in 1980. Of the four villages examined here, in only two (Zbeidat and Natufa) were data obtained on the basis of full household surveys. Administrative problems, including the need for military permits, prevented me from extending the survey to the other two villages. In those, I relied on interviews, informants, and - in the case of Ras el-Tin - extensive structured interviews with commuting peasant-workers which were crucial in explaining the phenomenon of peasant-proletarianization in this study. I was especially fortunate in obtaining cadastral land surveys for the villages of Marj Na'je and Zbeidat since, as any student of agrarian conditions knows, information obtained exclusively from farmers pertaining to land ownership and use tends to be of dubious reliability if not checked against accurate land records.

The most pressing methodological problem emerged in the choice of the villages selected. This occurred at two levels. There is, on the one hand, the broader conceptual problem involved in locating variables of agrarian change at the level of the village as a unit of analysis, as opposed to inter-village formations, or smaller units such as the farmstead or the peasant household. At the second level, there is the problem of representation, and the whole constellation of methodological issues connected with 'typicality' in village taxonomies.

The first, conceptual, problem was resolved by first introducing and