

into one continuous estate and technology and capital will be successfully applied. (11)

Finally, it must be added that in no place throughout the "sale documents" was there any reference to the national question or to the necessity to provide land to Jewish immigrants. The manner in which the sale contracts were conducted, was purely market oriented.

Nonetheless, this economic factor by no means implies that the sellers were to profit from the sale transaction. To the contrary, as the following evidence will show, neither the price paid in the Marj transfer was high nor was it the determining factor in the transaction.

Information from the initial sale contract which covered an area of about 7,356d. and included 11 villages does not strongly support this claim about the profitability of the sale.(12) The price paid for this area was estimated at 286,500 Egyptian pounds (or P.L.286,500). The acreage price per one dunam of land accordingly was about P.L.3. To date, no evidence has been provided as to the actual value of the land, however some strong indications regarding its approximate worth are available.

For example, in his reference to production in the Marj, Owen observed that in the late 19th and early 20th centuries the land was considered as a highly profitable enterprise, generating "great rewards" to the Sursuks (Owen,1981:175). Moreover, the documents of sale, in more than one place, emphasize the fact that prices paid by the purchasers were "either basically not higher than the prices paid for this land before the War". -The price offered before the war was estimated at 3 1/2 Egyptian pounds-, or that the price paid for