

father decided to devote himself entirely to his portion of the inheritance -- so the two brothers divided the lot between them.¹¹ Husam's father, now 90 years old and sick, had neglected the land and all his sons work outside the village, one of them in Germany. Mustafa's father, on the other hand, increased the land's yield by planting a vineyard and fig trees. One of his brothers now works mainly on the land. Not only does the family get a richer harvest, but also it has accumulated some savings from the land, in contrast to Husam's family plot which can barely meet household needs.

Thus while extended family land is often held and worked jointly by brothers in the hilly areas of the West Bank, the pressures created by wage labour outside the village often lead to different consequences for segments of the same family. Brothers are compelled to work their inherited portions of land separately, so that the labour contributed by members of one household may not be affected by the negligence of the other household. To what extent this further fragmentation of land is affecting overall productivity has yet to be examined, although there is no doubt about its prevalence today.

Work Outside the Village and Peasant Differentiation

One of the most important changes in village stratification has been the decline in the value of unirrigated land as a source of village wealth. This decline has been accompanied by the emergence of new sources of income: wage labour; income from migrant relatives abroad; salaries of educated sons; investment in building equipment (compressors, cement mixers, etc.); and -- in some regions -- investment for leasing purposes in agricultural machinery (tractors, harvesters, sprayers).