

empirical problems and the new empirical data on the socio-economic history of Palestine- suggests that a re-examination of both frameworks is necessary. As with other studies which reject, on historical-empirical grounds, the notion of pre-capitalist or peasant stagnation and stasis (Saleh, 1979; Patnaik, 1983; Chandra, 1981), the empirical evidence collected about Palestine's pre-capitalist economy suggests that the Palestinian peasantry was not passive, that their economy was not stagnant and that internal changes within this economy did occur prior to British colonialism.

The study of Palestine's economy requires an analytical framework capable of capturing the essence of that structure as it developed through time. To pursue this goal, the concepts of the AMP and "articulation" will be critically examined and their contribution to the question of transition will be discussed. Special emphasis will be placed on the character and nature of Third World peasantry as depicted by both concepts. This will then be followed by an attempt to construct an alternative analytical framework, which should be more appropriate to the actual history of Palestine.

### **The "Asiatic Mode of Production" Approach**

Following Marx, various writers adopted the notion of the "Asiatic Mode of Production" as an analytical framework to study changes in Asiatic socio-economic formations. The bulk of these studies have focused on large "peasant societies," primarily Indian (Melotti, 1977) and Egyptian (Saed, 1975; Amer, 1958; Salam, 1985). Most recently, however, the AMP has been invoked in Marxist studies on pre-capitalist Palestine (Saed, 1985; Gozansky, 1986). The concept of "Asiatic Mode of Production" is based on three major characteristics: the