

that societies tend to remain stable and that social mobility or change is very limited.

It has commonly been maintained that the Palestinian fallaheen were passive, interested only in day-to-day life and didn't consider politics to be their personal concern (Kimmerling,1983; Ohana,1981). Some authors have even pitied the Fallaheen for their state of "illiteracy" and lack of awareness to what goes around them (Stein,1984:38). When reference is made to any of the political movements in which the fallaheen were involved such as the 1929 peasant revolt or the 1936-39 revolution, their role in them is often distorted. Palestinian resistance is described as the work of a small elite who fought amongst itself more than against any enemy, mostly in order to restore its lost political pride. It is maintained that these elites, predominantly the heads of Hamulas, had their own bands or gangs. The masses of the peasants are described as 'sheep who follow the orders of their masters' (Ohana, 1978; Taqqu, 1980).

According to British official reports these Fallaheen were not passive, unaware of their surroundings or inactive. To the contrary, data show that in the 1920 demonstrations against the Balfour Declaration and in the 1929 revolt, the fallaheen had a clear and defined perspective on their national aspirations. On both occasions the Fallaneen demanded a national government and expressed fear and resentment at the prospect of a Jewish national home.

The lack of organization among the fallaheen and their state of so called "illiteracy" did not impede their political awareness. A detailed view of the political consciousness of the fallaheen is presented in the following report by the Shaw Commission, which was