

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study owes a great debt to the stimulating discussions about peasant societies organized in Manchester University by Teodor Shanin and Hamza Alavi during the years 1977 and 1978. In the heated debates about the nature of agrarian societies, provoked by wonderful friends from Latin America, South Asia, and elsewhere - including Manchester's own hinterland - the main contours of this work took shape. Teodor Shanin, who supervised this thesis, was particularly generous with his time and ideas, and gave me guidance, support and criticism when I most needed them. In our discussions, a friendship has grown that transcends the confines of academic discourse.

My gratitude goes to a number of friends and colleagues who over the past few years have critically discussed my work with me: Liz Taylor, Cynthia Myntti, Judy Blanc, Roger Owen, Henry Rosenfeld, Rita Giacaman, Sarah Graham-Brown, Ken Brown, Tayseer Aruri, Lisa Taraki, Sharif al-Musa, and Penny Johnson. I fondly attribute any eclecticism that appears in this thesis to their collective influence. I am also grateful to the members of three discussion circles in which I have the privilege of participating: The Rural Development Circle in the Arab Thought Forum (Jerusalem), The Middle East Group (UK), and the Boston Middle East Circle (AMAS).

In the field, I was greatly aided by a number of former students from Birzeit University. I particularly want to thank Buthaina al-Sha'bani, Rima Abdul-Nur, Ali Jaradat, Samir Hleileh, Fadwa Qirrish, Sari Abboushi, Muhammad Sa'id, and 'Odeh Shehadeh. They were compelled to work under the extremely difficult conditions prevailing today in the West Bank, and indeed on two occasions the survey led to arrests among them - a testimony, no doubt, to the continued subversive character of