there is some consensus about the nature of underdevelopment in societies of the periphery (1976:333-364/Bernstein, 1979:89):

> All peripheral formations have four main characteristics in common: (1) the predominance of agrarian capitalism in the national sector; (2) the creation of a local, mainly merchant, bourgeoisie in the wake of foreign capital; (3) a tendency towards a peculiar bureaucratic development, specific to the contemporary periphery; (4) the incomplete, specific character of the phenomena of proletarianization.

Now in the case of Palestine there is a number of peculiarities that makes it difficult to locate its social formation in the above scheme. There is, above all else, the absence of a national state, and its non-replacement - as far as Amin's generalizations are concerned - by the colonial state apparatus. What obtains as a result is the absence of a stable land tenure system rooted, not in the penetration of agrarian capitalism, but in the expanding attempts at land confiscation and Zionist claims of sovereignty. The colonial state neither subsidizes, nor reforms, nor regulates the agrarian régime except to the extent that it protects its own market and insulates it from the vagaries of Arab agriculture. Thus, instead of the 'predominance of agrarian capitalism in the national sector' there prevails, outside the Jordan Valley, increasing marginalization of the land. Instead of the creation of a local mercantile bourgeoisie, we have the subordination of local capital - through the mediation of petty merchant capital and subcontracting firms - to the Israeli commodity market. Instead of the 'peculiar bureaucratic development' there is an absence of a statist sector, and its replacement by a military government which dismembered the public sector from its former connections with the Jordanian state and integrated it into the domain of the Israeli state. To compound this situation, there developed in the last five years (since 1978) a dual politico-juridical system dealing separately with the councils of