

adaptability of the family farm to various forms of re-structuration of agrarian relations (cf. e.g. Stavenhagen, 1975:149-150). In Palestinian peasant communities, village-bounded kinship networks are crucial in identifying patterns of internal differentiation (as in the case of Ras el-Tin, in this case putative lineage), or homogeneity (as in the case of Zbeidat). Even when kinship patterns cut across a number of village communities and relate them to each other, lineage organisation internal to the peasant community acts as the more decisive variable in such basic mechanisms of agrarian transition as recruitment of village labour by urban contractors (Chapter 7), and landlord-peasant share compacts (Chapter 11).

The second level of methodological problematic raises the issue of the representative character of the village chosen. A village ethnograph, written in the framework of traditional social anthropology, pauses its own rationale. Its main concern usually is to interpret the cultural attributes of broader society embedded in the village at the micro-level. Its main concern lies in choosing a community that is not seen as excessively 'deviant' in its socio-economic structure. On the other extreme of the disciplinary spectrum we have rural studies of the agronomic and 'developmental' nature, where statistical representation and problems of 'typicality' become primary. The solution in such studies is to establish an elaborate taxonomy on the basis of a weighted complex of socio-economic indices reflecting the components of variables to be analyzed, and then proceed to locate a number of rural communities which constitute the randomly selected 'types' within a classification system thus established (cf. e.g. Rudra et al., 1978:1-36).

But this study is neither ethnographic nor agronomic in its approach. Its disciplinary perspective is, broadly speaking, that of rural sociology. While it shares with the above disciplines a methodological