

(tha'r, or blood revenge, is obligatory on relatives of the slain to the fifth degree of kinship, (Parkes, 1949: 142)). This explains why the ghazzu was not always an organized military attack but rather an act of theft. A few Bedouin would creep into the fallah's fields and try to steal his agricultural produce or his animals and disappear unnoticed if possible. They were not always successful and disputes between the two did arise. There were also major attacks which the Bedouin undertook against villages or even towns such as the attack of the Bedouin on Hebron, Nablus and Jerusalem in the 1840s (ibid.).

The pattern and frequency of raids were dependent upon several factors: the provision of security by the central government was a key element, so were geographic proximity, alliances forged by the fallah to protect himself, and climatic conditions. Hardships resulting from bad climatic conditions, such as droughts, made Bedouin sporadic cultivation almost impossible. This obviously threatened the Bedouin livelihood and made their raids more frequent.

In the absence of government control and authority, and in order to protect himself from Bedouin raids, the fallah often resorted to alliances with different groups. We know of alliances between different villages, between village and powerful urban centre, and with influential urban notables. In some cases the fallah took refuge within the city walls. Such was the case for many villagers who worked the lands around Jerusalem. In many instances, the fallah saw his security in allying himself with the enemy. Villages in the Bethlehem area allied themselves with the Ta'amra Bedouin tribe, as did the peasants of the Jordan Valley. In such cases, the fallah often paid annual dues (khuweh) in exchange for protection. In other instances, the fallah was protected and allowed to cultivate tracts of lands which were under Bedouin control.

INFLUENCE ON SEDENTARY SETTLEMENTS

Obviously the proximity to Bedouin encampments had a significant influence on the pattern of sedentary settlements. As I have already mentioned, "peripheral strips" were mostly affected by