

seedstock, land and water against the labour of the share-tenant who received a portion of the harvest ranging from one-fourth to one-half the crop. A complex variety of contracts (mostly oral) prevailed depending on the crop and the strength of kinship and or filial ties bonding the landlord to the share-tenant (Firestone, 1978).

Not all forms of cropping arrangements were vertical and contractual. Family allocation of labour to other farmers often took the form of mutual aid in a system known as 'auneh. The 'auneh was extended to farmers who were in need of extra help because of seasonal demand on a basis of reciprocity. Villagers would usually volunteer one day of work. Wilson notes:

"...people will also not unfrequently help friends and neighbours to get in their harvest. Especially is this the case if one has finished before another, or if anything delays the threshing. Sometimes a dozen of more men and women may thus be seen in line reaping, and it is astonishing to note the rate at which they will clear the ground".

He adds

"In the case of friendly help from neighbours, the Fallah, on the conclusion of the threshing, makes a feast to which he invites all who have given him any assistance in getting his crops. The feast is called Jeerah" (Wilson, 1906: 217).

The same basis of mutual help was applied to the building of a new house (see chapter 4). It should be noted, however, that whether the cropping arrangements were vertical and exploitative in nature or horizontal and mutual, they both - especially the former - cut across family and clan ties and created close patterns of interactions, enhanced by the cyclical activities of agricultural production.