

part of the land to the cropper who rejuvenates it.

From the cultivator's point of view, there are three important determinants of the form of sharetenancy: (1) the nature of the crop, most particularly whether his work involves the cropping of trees, vegetables, or cereals; (2) whether the land is dry-farmed (ba'liyya) or irrigated (marwiyya)--as it involves different contractual arrangements; and (3) the degree of investment in the stock and labour provided by each party: landlord, cropper, and (today) the commission agent. The classic pattern of simple cropping, as distinguished from joint farming, until WWII, was the muraba'a system, in which the cropper was also the landless, or near landless, ploughman. Each village would have a number of specialized ploughmen whose land was hardly sufficient for their family's subsistence. Against the provision of land and the seed stock, the ploughman would provide the ploughing (usually using his own utensils and ploughing animals) and the work of his family and a hired tiller (bahhash)--the latter probably recruited from the absolutely destitute among the village population. The harrath's duties included three ploughings (before the winter rains, turning the weeds over, and immediately before sowing - known respectively as krab, thnayeh, and tathleeth).

In addition, the harrath was also expected to plough the landlord's orchards (for which he did not receive any share of the crop -- Aranki, 1980), and the provision of his family's labour during the harvest season. His share for all this amounted to 1/4 the yield allotted at the threshing floor after deductions for tithe, etc., were made. Today, this practice has all but disappeared and ploughmen are paid in cash for the provision of their animals and labour. Croppers are hired directly and separately by the farmer.