

Nevertheless, these political trends rarely take the path of direct confrontation with the village elders, the two mukhtars, or even the few rich entrepreneurs in the village. For they represent forces who continue to maintain the closest bonds with their patriarchal families through the joint possession and control of the family land. And while the son of a peasant patriarch becomes, as a wage-worker, financially independent of his father, often moving into a separate dwelling and even occasionally dividing the land in his father's own lifetime, he keeps setting aside a portion of his earnings, and -- more important -- days of his labour time, for the benefit of the patriarchal household and its land. In return, his extended family, although no longer joined together in the same physical household, lends him its name and offers him protection in times of crises, thus serving as the mediator of his collective identity in the village.

Notes

1. Before Israeli occupation in 1967 many Ras el-Tin emigrants had worked in the Beirut harbour area as painters and white-washers, and had acquired a reputation in the trade.
2. The word mu'allem is used by workers to designate two different meanings: a boss (or a sub-contractor), and a master-craftsman. Sometimes, the term refers to the two attributes merged in the same person, as the present case demonstrates.
3. "Robbing the Arab workers from the territories," Al-Hamishmar, July 13, 1978. Quoted in MERIP, No. 74, January 1979, p. 17.
4. Sumayyah Farhat-Nasir, 1980:59 (Table 22). The net yield for "regular" trees was estimated at 338 I.L. against an investment of 172 I.L. per dunum during good years, and 80-114 I.L. during bad (shalatuneh) years. (See also note 25 below).
5. For a discussion of the sexual division of labour among Palestinian peasants in the hilly regions, see Munir Nasir, 1974:77.